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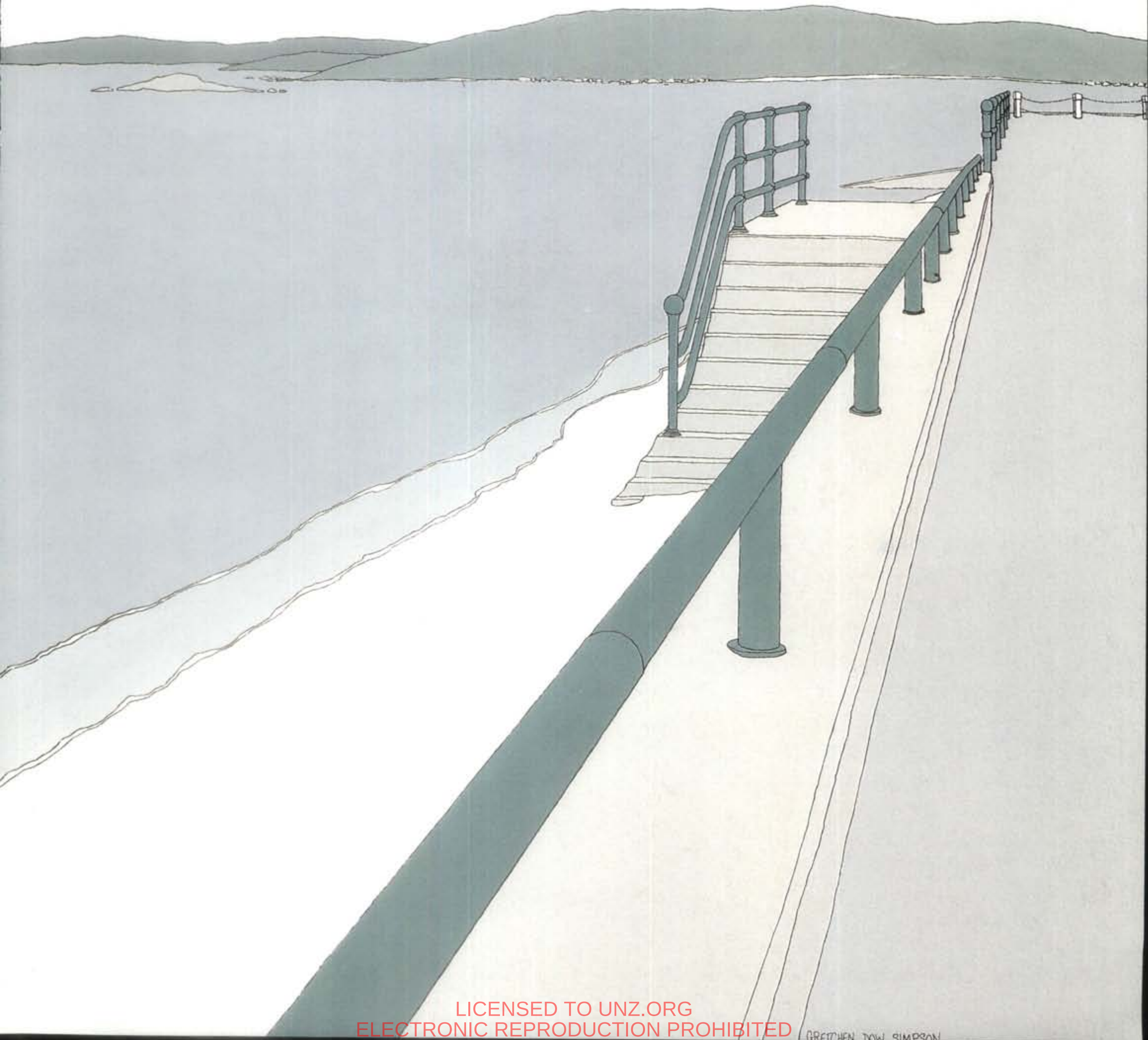
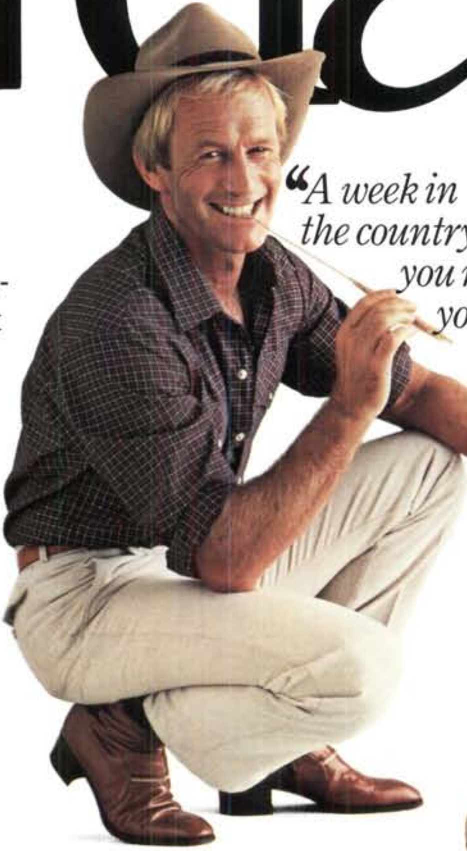
THE NEW YORKER


GRETCHEN DOW SIMPSON

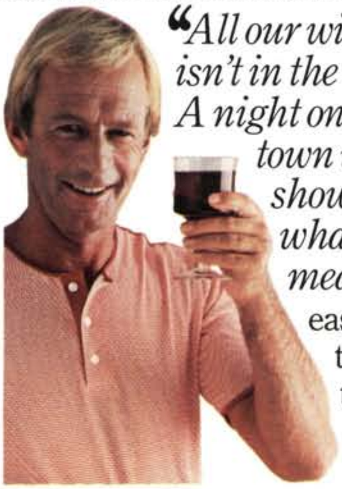
"G'day."



"A week in the country will relax muscles you never knew you had."

Now it's come to my attention that some of you lot still have been putting off your Aussie holiday. If you don't mind my saying so, you're missing a fair dinkum bargain.

The first thing you should know about Australia is how easy it is to get there. The fare won't set you back much, and we're less than a day away. In fact, about the only thing that's far away Down Under are the troubles they have in some less fortunate spots.



"All our wildlife isn't in the bush. A night on the town will show you what I mean."

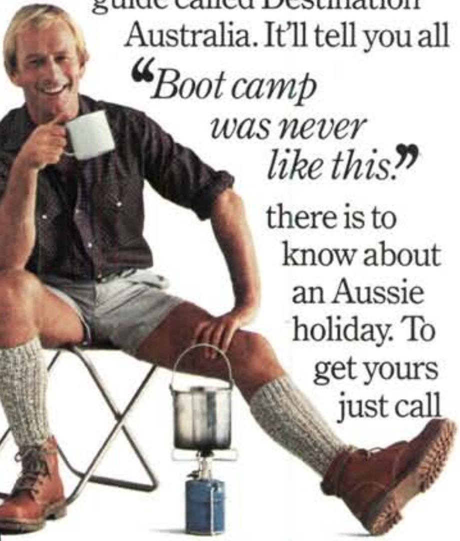
The second thing is that Australia isn't just another country, it's a continent. Which means you can play slap-and-tickle with a friendly fish on the Great Barrier Reef one day, and enjoy a soulful song at world-famous Sydney Opera House the next.

Or build yourself a thirst with a spot of bargain hunting in one of our friendly cities. Then wash it away in a country vineyard with one of our world-class wines.

And while you're seeing the sights, you'll be speaking a language that bears a striking resemblance to your own. It sounds a lot like the Queen's English would if Her Majesty spent more time teasing koalas, chasing legends around the Outback, and messing about in boats.

To help you on your way, there's a free 120-page travel guide called Destination Australia. It'll tell you all there is to know about an Aussie holiday. To get yours just call 1-800-445-3000 and ask for Dept. NY09.

Then come and say g'day. We're easy to get to know.



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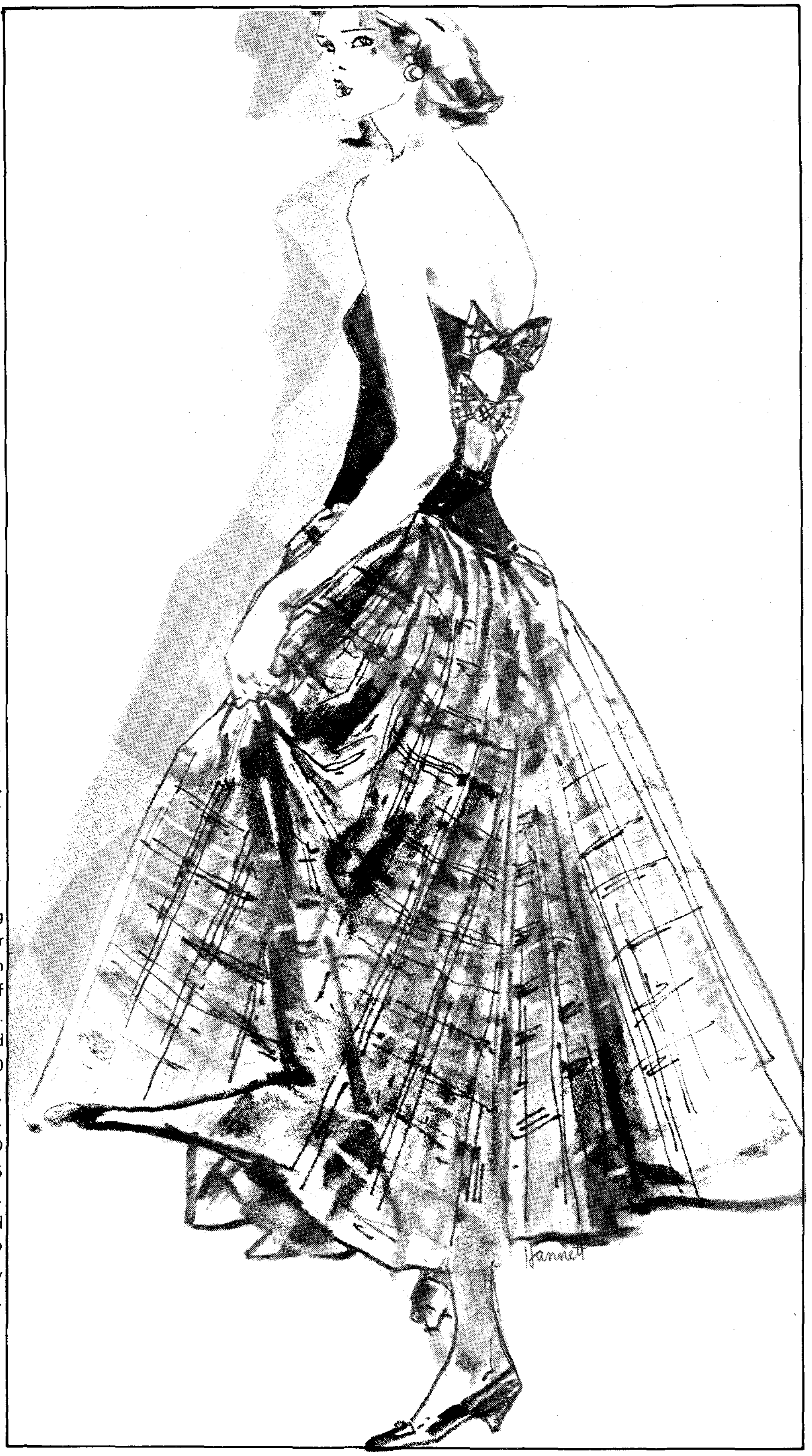

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

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THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

American Theatre Exchange—The last production in a festival of plays by American regional theatre companies is **IN THE BELLY OF THE BEAST**, from the Mark Taper Forum of Los Angeles. (Joyce, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Wednesday through Friday at 8, and Saturday at 9. Matinées Wednesday at 2 and Saturday at 5. Closes Saturday, Aug. 31.)

Arms and the Man—A self-indulgent production of Shaw's early comedy, in which the director and all the members of the cast dare to patronize the author. (Reviewed in our issue of 6/10/85.) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Wednesday and Saturday at 2, and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, Sept. 1.)

As Is—This touching play by William M. Hoffman concerns a personable young homosexual who is afflicted with AIDS, and is also a documentary of sorts about his milieu in this city. The lively, impressionistic performance was directed by Marshall W. Mason, and the acting by the large cast, several of whom appear in multiple roles, is just right. With Jonathan Hogan and Jonathan Hadary. (3/25/85) (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Big River—William Hauptman and Roger Miller have drawn an agreeably sentimental musical out of "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," and Mark Twain in Heaven has reason to be satisfied with the results. (5/13/85) (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Biloxi Blues—A further chapter in the life story of Eugene Morris Jerome, a literary stand-in for the author, Neil Simon. The time is 1943, Eugene is in the Army, and his adventures in Biloxi are truly not to be believed. The director, Gene Saks, has worked hard to squeeze the last drop of humor out of this peculiar fruit. (4/8/85) (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 757-8646. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Curse of the Starving Class—A revival of Sam Shepard's brilliant, humorous, passionate play, with a fine performance by Kathy Bates, as the mother of the family under examination. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Saturdays at 2:30.)

Dames at Sea—A revival of a musical by Jim Wise (score) and George Haimsohn and Robin Miller (book and lyrics). (Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Doubles—A number of coarse jokes about Jewish husbands and Jewish wives fill an evening that purports to be about four middle-aged tennis players in Connecticut. Written by David Wiltse and starring Austin Pendleton, Keir Dullea, Ron Leibman, and Tony Roberts. (5/20/85) (Ritz, 219 W. 48th St. 582-4022. Nightly, except Sundays and Labor Day, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Labor Day at 3.)

I'm Not Rappaport—Herb Gardner's rather synthetic, though often entertaining, comedy about two old men who share a bench in Central Park is given an expert performance by Cleavon Little and Judd Hirsch. (6/17/85) (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 869-4731. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Mayor—A musical based on the best-seller of the same name by Edward I. Koch. With a score and lyrics by Charles Strouse and a book by Warren Leight. (Top of the Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 982-9292. Tuesdays, except Sept. 3, through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3; special matinée Labor Day at 5.)

Negro Ensemble Company—A rather beguiling, if lightweight, farce by the Jamaican playwright Trevor Rhone, **TWO CAN PLAY** is about a middle-aged Jamaican couple. The husband is a blowhard; the wife is put-upon in every way, until she flies to Miami and comes back a changed woman. The first act is too intricate for its own good, but the second act is clear and funny. The actors—Hazel J. Medina and Sullivan H. Walker—couldn't be better. (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 246-8545. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 8:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 3 and Sundays at 2:30.)

The Normal Heart—An interminable, trashy, non-play about AIDS, and its victims in the homosexual community of this city, who are compared to the Jews under the Nazis. The names Hitler, Roosevelt, Morgenthau, and, eventually, Mayor Koch are dropped with equal contempt. The evening is an insult to its audience and, what is far more serious, to the sufferers from this dreadful, seemingly hopeless disease. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

The Odd Couple—Neil Simon has turned his comedy about a pair of ill-matched men into a non-comedy about a pair of women the like of which has never been seen on earth, much less on Riverside Drive. (6/24/85) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Orphans—A melodrama, by Lyle Kessler, about two young brothers—one a street thief and pickpocket, the other an apparent dimwit—and an older mobster who takes over their house and their lives. The first act works quite well, the second is merely serviceable, but what really counts is the performance, under the dynamic direction of Gary

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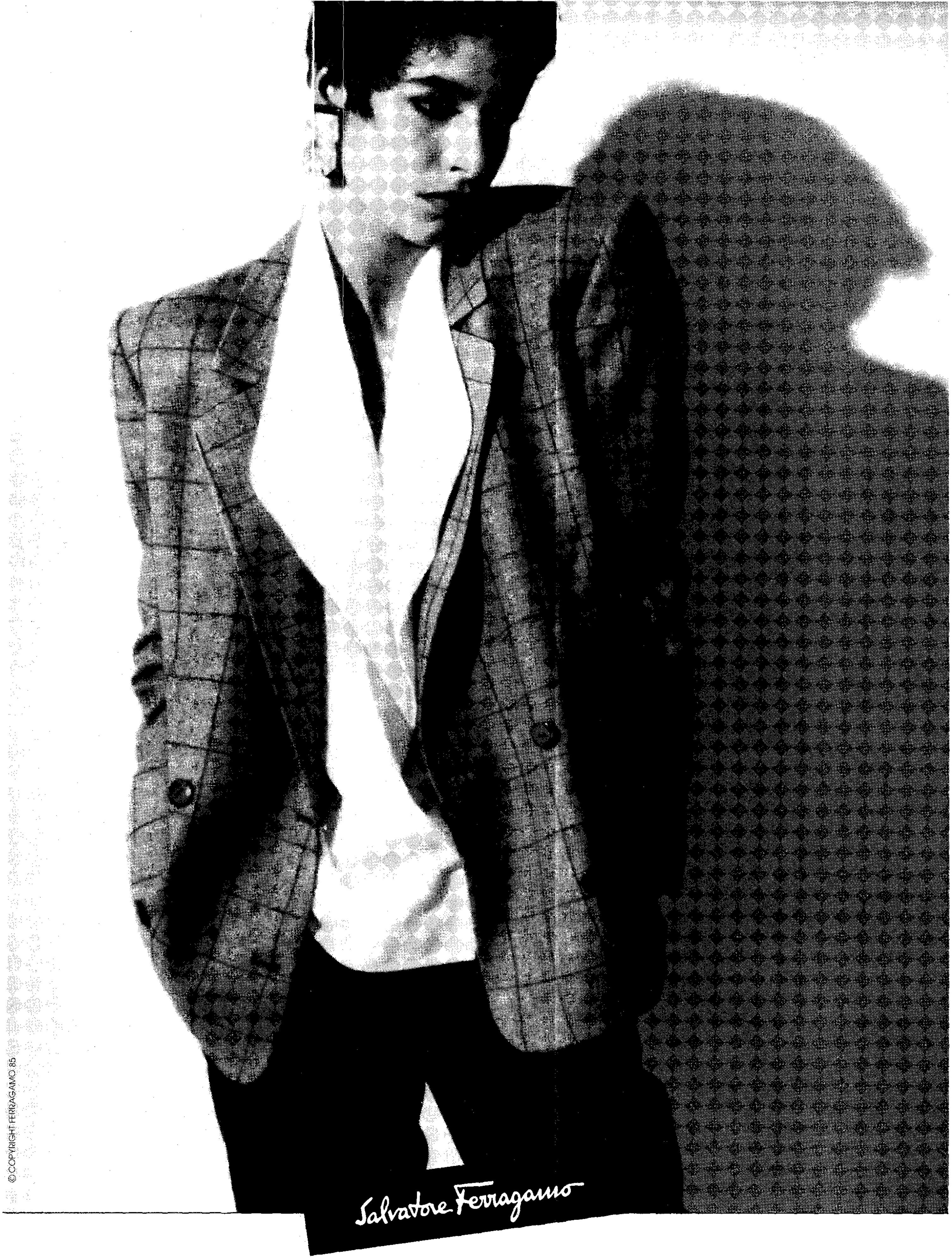
Salvatore Ferragamo

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FIRENZE MILANO ROMA NAPOLI GENOVA TORINO BARI CAPRI LONDON ZÜRICH

Sinise. The actors are Kevin Anderson, Terry Kinney, and John Mahoney, and the show is an import from the Steppenwolf Company of Chicago. (5/20/85) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

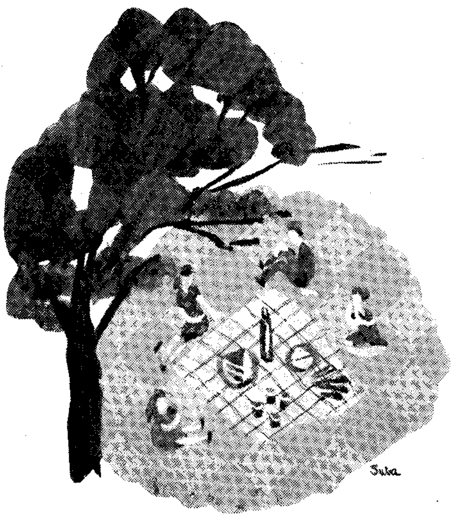
Penn & Teller—A sublime combination of conjuring and comedy. Penn Jillette does the talking; Teller is silent. (5/6/85) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Sundays at 3. No performances Tuesday through Sunday, Sept. 3-8.)

Singin' in the Rain—What can only be called a watered-down version of the celebrated M-G-M original. The show, directed and choreographed by Twyla Tharp, tries to do too many things at once, with a cast that is hardworking but not very winsome; the absence of the incomparable Gene Kelly becomes a rueful presence. (7/15/85) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Springtime for Henry—A revival of the 1931 comedy by Benn W. Levy, with Peter Evans, Tovah Feldshuh, George N. Martin, and Jodi Thelen. (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday at 2. Closes Sunday, Sept. 1.)

What's a Nice Country Like You . . . Doing in a State Like This?—An updated version of the 1973 satirical revue by the original creators, composer Cary Hoffman and lyricist Ira Gasman. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S., at Sheridan Sq. 691-6226. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Long Runs—**BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS:** Neil Simon looks back with fondness upon his youth in the gloomy thirties. (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LA CAGE AUX FOLLES:** A musical with Van Johnson and Walter Charles as a pair of tenderhearted middle-aged lovers presiding over a drag-queen night club in Saint-Tropez; the production is one of the most beautiful—and extravagant—ever to reach Broadway. Jerry Herman wrote the music and lyrics; the book is by Harvey Fierstein. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 757-2626. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **CATS:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to the sets and costumes by John Napier. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** 10,544 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **FOOL FOR LOVE:** Sam Shepard's play—mysterious, funny, and beautiful—is about two battling, loving lovers in a motel room at the edge of the Mojave Desert and about many other matters as well. Mr. Shepard directed. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Sundays at 8; Saturday, Aug. 31, at 7:30 and 10; and Saturday, Sept. 7, at 7 and 9:30. Matinée Thursday, Aug. 29, at 3.) . . . **THE FOREIGNER:** A very funny play by Larry Shue, with good performances by every single member of the company, most notably by Kevin Geer as a lovable half-wit. Jerry Zaks was the admirable director. (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St., near Astor Pl. 254-4370. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **42ND STREET:** A musical based on the old Warner Brothers movie and by no means an improvement on it. Directed and choreographed by the late Gower Champion. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays and Labor Day, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **ISN'T IT ROMANTIC:** A spirited production of Wendy Wasserstein's sometimes painful but always witty comedy about a pair of female "best friends" at age twenty-eight, and especially about the trials of one of them, Janie Blumberg. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Wednesday through Friday at 8; Saturday at 7 and 10; and Sunday at 7. Matinée Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, Sept. 1.) . . . **LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS:** Taking off from Roger Corman's 1960 horror quickie about a man-eating plant, this exuberant, jokey musical is wholly free of camp. The score is by Alan Menken, and Howard Ashman directed and wrote the book and lyrics. Martin P. Robinson designed the menacing plant. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **OH! CALCUTTA!:** A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 302-2302. Mondays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7.) . . . **SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GEORGE:** A beautiful and often very touching musical by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine, based on the life (partly imaginary) of Georges Seurat. With Mandy Patinkin and Maryann Plunkett. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)



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MISCELLANY

Follies—A concert version of the Stephen Sondheim (score and lyrics) and James Goldman (book) musical. With, among others, Barbara Cook, George Hearn, Mandy Patinkin, Lee Remick, and the New York Philharmonic conducted by Paul Gemignani. (Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424. Friday and Saturday, Sept. 6-7, at 8.)

Forbidden Broadway 1985—A musical satire of Shubert Alley denizens. The lyrics to the song parodies are by Gerard Alessandrini. (Palsson's Upstairs, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8:30; Fridays and Saturdays at 8:30 and 11:30; and Sundays at 8:30.)

DANCE

American Ballet Theatre—A two-week engagement that starts Tuesday, Sept. 3, and will end on Sunday, Sept. 15. "Romeo and Juliet" will be performed through Saturday, Sept. 7. (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000. Evenings at 8; Wednesday, Sept. 4, will be a benefit performance—for tickets, call 477-3030.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Angry Squire, 216 Seventh Ave., at 23rd St. (242-9066)—Jazz in a lively Chelsea bar and restaurant bedecked with nautical stuff. Wednesday and Thursday, Aug. 28-29, will be devoted to guitar duets by **BUCKY & JOHN PIZZARELLI;** Friday and Saturday, Aug. 30-31, Mark Morganelli's quartet will be present; Monday, Sept. 2, Mark Morganelli will return; and Wednesday through Saturday, Sept. 4-7, driving alto saxophonist **SONNY FORTUNE** will head up a quartet. Sets begin at ten.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A dark, large, carpeted club with deep-blue tablecloths and a curvy bar. Tenor saxophonist **STANLEY TURRENTINE** and his band perform through Sunday, Sept. 1; Monday, Sept. 2, will belong to saxophonist and wonderful flutist **FRANK WESS** and his group; and on Tuesday, Sept. 3, singers **JON HENDRICKS** and **ANNIE ROSS,** reunited at last, will take charge. Sets begin after nine. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A large-venue pop, rock, folk, and jazz club with, thank heavens, tables and chairs. Wednesday and Thursday, Aug. 28-29, Jay Leno; Friday and Saturday, Aug. 30-31, Bernie Worrell and Friends; and Friday and Saturday, Sept. 6-7, rock-and-roll pathfinder **BO DIDDLEY** and the Nighthawks. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A real New York bar; it has dark wood panelling and some very good piano-bass teams. **CEDAR WALTON** and **DAVID WILLIAMS** form the team that plays here through Saturday, Aug. 31, and **KIRK LIGHTSEY** and Santi Debriano will move in on Sunday, Sept. 1. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Exposed rafters, weathered, splintery wood posts, decrepit neon beer signs, and a general ramshackle feel. All this and rock and roll, too. Monday is showcase night. Shows nightly from long after nine-thirty.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—A velvet-and-mirror-walled below-stairs singers'—right now—room. Thursday through Sunday, Aug. 29-Sept. 1, **MORGANA KING** will be here, and Thursday through Sunday, Sept. 5-8, will be given over to **CISSY HOUSTON.** Mondays are the property of guitarist **LES PAUL'S** trio. Sets begin Sundays, Mondays, and Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight. Dining.

Folk City, 130 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (254-8449)—The schedule: Wednesday, Aug. 28, the Reducers, the Gutbank, and the Stepford Husbands; Friday, Aug. 30, comedy night; Saturday, Aug. 31, John Stewart; Sunday, Sept. 1, the Folk Brothers, Cameron, Greg Aulden, and Stephen Jackson; Tuesday, Sept. 3, Michael Garin, Tony Forte, Marilyn J., and Roger Manning; Wednesday, Sept. 4, **ALEX CHILTON,** Salem 66, and the Naked Prey; Thursday, Sept. 5, the New York Improv Squad and Beverly Mickens; and Saturday, Sept. 7, **ELLEN MC ILWAINE.** Shows usually begin at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty.

Gregory's, 1149 First Ave., at 63rd St. (371-2220)—**DAVID ALLYN** sings with the Scott Hardy duo through Sunday, Sept. 1; on Mondays, pianist Baba Motta and bassist John Belzaguy team up; Tuesdays belong to guitarist **CHUCK WAYNE'S** trio; and on Wednesday, Sept. 4, Alicia Sherman will begin singing to the accompaniment of Peter Madsen and Phil Bowler. All these groups begin about ten.

Hanratty's, 1754 Second Ave., at 91st St. (289-3200)—A spiffy back-room haunt for traditional-jazz pianists and their admirers. **DICK WELLSTOOD,** the adept stride-piano specialist whose home base this room is, can be heard

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

through Saturday, Aug. 31; starting Tuesday, Sept. 3, Henry Francis, who, when he's not working as a research scientist, is a robust stride pianist, will take over the keyboard. Sundays are claimed by Keith MacDonald, and Mondays by John Colianni. Music Sundays through Thursdays from eight-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays from nine. Dining.

Knickerbocker Saloon, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A nice room with a piano-bass policy. The pianists and bassists: **DON FRIEDMAN** and **RON MC CLURE** through Saturday, Aug. 31, and **CEDAR WALTON** and **RON CARTER** starting Tuesday, Sept. 3. Music from nine-thirty. Dining.

Lone Star Café, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—No, this isn't the Department of Rockabilly at the New School. It's a degentrified Schrafft's where the authentic Texas ambience is more representative of Austin than of Dallas. Wednesday, Aug. 28, Livingston Taylor and the Jon Pousette-Dart band; Thursday, Aug. 29, **JUNIOR WALKER** & the All-Stars and Felix & the Havanas; Sunday, Sept. 1, reggae-ist **BIG YOUTH;** Tuesday, Sept. 3, tenor saxophonist **DAVID (FATHEAD) NEWMAN;** Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 4-5, the **ALBERT KING** blues band and the Bill Dicey blues band. Music after nine nightly. Dining.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—"The Roots of American Jazz," with Eddy Davis & the Turn of the Century Minstrels, a celebration of New Orleans jazz, can be heard Tuesdays through Saturdays. Music at nine and eleven. On Monday nights from nine-thirty to midnight, Woody Allen is likely to show up to play celebrity clarinet with a New Orleans-style sextet. Dining. Closed Sundays.

Mikell's, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—A longtime music hangout on the upper West Side. The musicians: Thursday, Aug. 29, Steve Bargonetti; Friday and Saturday, Aug. 30-31, the superb jazz and rhythm-and-blues drummer **STEVE GADD** and his quartet; and Monday, Sept. 2, **JUMP STREET,** a fine, lively ten-piece outfit. Music from about ten. Dining.

Rainbow Room, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (757-9090)—**PANAMA FRANCIS,** the savvy jazz and fifties rock-and-roll drummer who has in his career worked with Lucky Millinder, Sammy Price, Cab Calloway, and Dinah Shore, heads up his totally swinging combo, the **SAVOY SULTANS,** for listening and Lindying Tuesdays through Thursdays from seven to one; Fridays and Saturdays from eight to two; and Sundays from six to midnight. Dining.

Ritz, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—The mostly rock-and-roll roster: Thursday, Aug. 29, reggae-ists the **MEDITATIONS;** Friday, Aug. 30, the Raunch Hands, Cody Lee & the Walk, and Roadhouse; and Monday, Sept. 2, the Frantix. Shows begin after nine Mondays through Thursdays, and after eleven Fridays and Saturdays. Dancing.

Seventh Avenue South, 21 Seventh Ave. S., at Leroy St. (242-4694)—The jazz, jazz-rock, and R. & B. schedule: Wednesday, Aug. 28, Mike Dolan; Thursday through Saturday, Aug. 29-31, saxophonist **STEVE GROSSMAN;** Sunday, Sept. 1, guitarist **BARRY FINNERTY;** Tuesday, Sept. 3, Mescaline; Wednesday, Sept. 4, guitarist **VERNON REID;** Thursday, Sept. 5, the Duda Band; and Friday and Saturday, Sept. 6-7, guitarist **CORNELL DUPREE,** pianist **RICHARD TEE,** and their fellow R. & B.-ists in **WHO IT IS.**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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Mondays are set aside for the **TOM PIERSON** orchestra. Music from nine-thirty.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great place to listen to mostly Brazilian music—Brazilian-jazz groups, samba bands, reggae bands, and all-percussion ensembles that perform *carnaval* music—and it tends to be swirling, heady, wonderful stuff. On its busy weekends, the club feels like the rush hour in Rio. Wednesday and Thursday, Aug. 28-29, Nigerian songwriter **SONNY OKOSUN;** Friday and Saturday, Aug. 30-31, **MIKATA;** Sunday, Sept. 1, the **AFRICAN CONNECTION;** Wednesday, Sept. 4, calypso music by the **MIGHTY SPARROW;** and Saturday, Sept. 7, Brazilian Independence Day, with a Brazilian revue. Music from ten. Dining. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—This knotty-pine night club keeps bringing in proven jazz players, and the place keeps on being crowded. Drummer and father figure (for over thirty years and for scores of young musicians) **ART BLAKEY** will guide the '85 edition of the **JAZZ MESSENGERS** through Sunday, Sept. 1. On Monday, Sept. 2, starting at two in the afternoon there'll be non-stop music until after midnight: the **STEVE TURRE & JOHN BLAKE** quintet, the **KHAN JAMAL** quartet, **SAM RIVERS' RIVBEA ORCHESTRA, KESHAVAN** with **CHARLES** and **CHARNET MOFFETT,** and the **BEAVER HARRIS 360° MUSIC EXPERIENCE.** And on Tuesday, Sept. 3, pianist **MC COY TYNER** will arrive. Shows from about ten. Dining.

Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—In the big downstairs room, there's salsa after nine on Mondays: on Sept. 2, **WILLIE ROSARIO Y SU ORQUESTA, RAY BARRETTO** and his orchestra, and saxophonist **RONNIE CUBER,** the guest jazz soloist, will be present. Friday through Sunday, Aug. 30-Sept. 1, the trio Pieces of a Dream will perform at ten and midnight. . . . ¶ Meanwhile, out on the Terrace, **JUNIOR MANCE** and **MARTY RIVERA** play jumping piano-bass duets every night but Monday. Jazz harpist **DAPHNE HELLMAN** is also present on Tuesdays. Music from nine-thirty.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Perhaps the most famous basement in the world, now fifty years old, has been described by Max Gordon, the wise proprietor and resident father figure, as "a good joint that people like to come to—thank God." **ARTHUR BLYTHE,** the alto saxophonist with the lush, shimmering, full-but-not-too-filling tone that ought to be heard live, is here with pianist **JOHN HICKS,** bassist **REGGIE WORKMAN,** and drummer **BOBBY BATTLE** through Sunday, Sept. 1; on Tuesday, Sept. 3, guitarist **CHARLIE BYRD** and tenor saxophonist **AL COHN** will begin co-piloting a quartet. Mondays are **MEL LEWIS BIG BAND** Blast-Off Nights. Music from ten.

West End, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—Past the steam tables of piping-hot student food, beyond the pinball machines is a room full of swing music, Latin jazz, and hard bop. Vibraharpist **WARREN CHIASSON** works with guitarist **CHUCK WAYNE,** pianist **KIRK LIGHTSEY,** drummer **TODD COOLMAN,** and bassist **WALTER BOLDEN** through Monday, Sept. 2, and on Tuesday, Sept. 3, the Victor Lesser quintet will begin performing. Music from about nine.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A speakeasy in the twenties, Reno Sweeney in the seventies, this ground-floor town-house space is now a SoHo-sleek and spacious bar and restaurant with a musical passageway between them. Bluesy pianist **HAROLD MABERN** trades fours with bassist **JAMIL NASSER** through Saturday, Aug. 31, and on Tuesday, Sept. 3, pianist **BILL MAYS** will move in with bassist **STEVE LA SPINA.** Closed Sundays and Labor Day.

JAZZ / FOLK / ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

R.E.M.—With Three O'Clock. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 246-4600. Saturday, Aug. 31, at 8.)

Lou Donaldson Quartet, the James Moody Quartet, and the Barry Harris Trio—In a salute to Charlie Parker. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Saturday, Aug. 31, at 8.)

Salsa Festival—Celia Cruz, Tito Puente, Rubén Blades, Hector Lavoe, and others. (Madison Square Garden. 564-4400. Saturday, Aug. 31, at 8.)

Luther Vandross—Radio City Music Hall. Thursday through Sunday, Sept. 5-8, and Tuesday, Sept. 10, at 7:30.

Frank Sinatra—With Pete Barbutti in the opening performances of a ten-day engagement. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Thursday through Saturday, Sept. 5-7, at 8.)

Jazz Center of New York—Wednesday, Aug. 28: Sumi Tonooka trio at 9, and Kuni Mikami & the East of the Sun Orchestra at 10:30. . . . ¶ Thursday, Aug. 29, at 9 and 10:30: Bobby Sanabria & Ascensión. . . . ¶ Friday through Sunday, Aug. 30-Sept. 1, at 9 and 10:30: Dakota Staton & the Bross Townsend trio. . . . ¶ Monday, Sept. 2, at 9 and 10:30: Clifford Jordan's Big Band. (380 Lafayette St. 505-5660.)

Greenwich House—Wednesday, Aug. 28, at 8: Gunter Hampel Galaxie Big Band. . . . ¶ Thursday, Aug. 29, at 8: Oliver Lake quintet. . . . ¶ Friday, Aug. 30, at 8: Jimmy Giuffre quartet. . . . ¶ Sunday, Sept. 1, at 8: Licorice Factory. (27 Barrow St. Tickets at the door on the nights of the concerts.)

ART

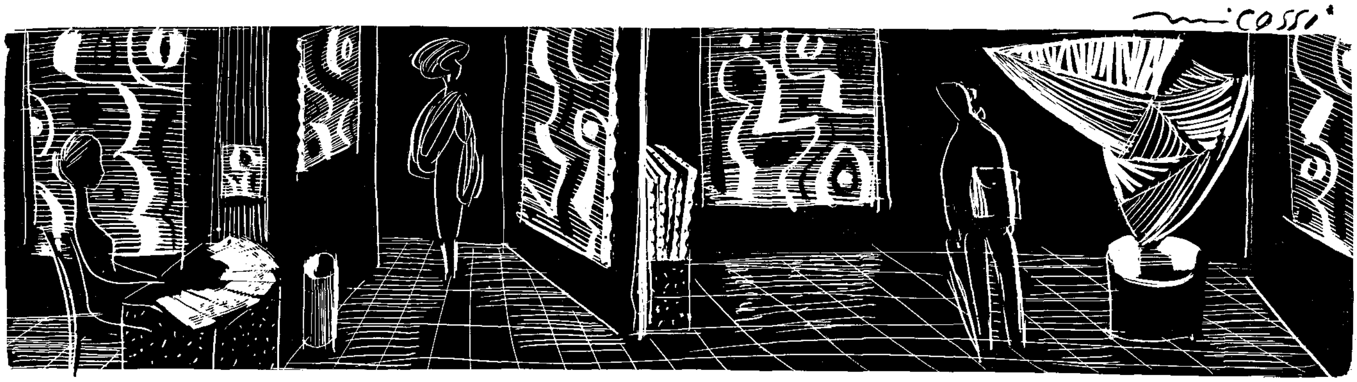
(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Mondays through Fridays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6. They will be closed Labor Day.)

GALLERIES

Michael Heizer—Paintings, sculptures, drawings, and photographs related to this Conceptualist's earthworks. Through Sept. 14. (Fourcade, 36 E. 75th St. Closed Mondays.)

Egon Schiele (1890-1918)—Seventeen oils or gouaches, varnished like violins, by this Austrian Expressionist. The subjects include figures, landscapes, and boats. Through Sept. 14. (Sabarsky, 987 Madison Ave., at 77th St. Opens Tuesdays through Saturdays at noon.)

Art on the Beach—Ten installations, each created by a different group of individuals (for instance, an artist, an architect, and a dancer) and each the site of a performance, are the summer tenants on a plot of sand next to the Hudson River. The show is Crea-



tive Time's last project at this place. Through Sept. 13. (Battery Park City Landfill, Gate 18, Chambers and West Sts. Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5:30.) . . . ¶ Diane Torr and John Heys will perform on Wednesday, Aug. 28 (rain date Aug. 31); Yoshiko Chuma & the School of Hard Knocks will perform on Wednesday, Sept. 4 (Sept. 5); Sun Ra & the Solar Arkestra will perform on Saturday, Sept. 7 (Sept. 11). All shows start at 6:30. Tickets at the gate.

Group Shows—At the **artists' choice,** 394 West Broadway: "The Figure in the Landscape" is the title for this selection of paintings by thirty-four artists from all parts of the United States. Through Sept. 8. (Open daily except Mondays.) . . . **associated american artists,** 20 W. 57th St.: More than a hundred etchings, woodcuts, and lithographs depicting rural and city buildings by Stow Wengenroth, Thomas Hart Benton, David Hockney, Grace Albee, and many others. Through Wednesday, Sept. 4. . . . **center for african art,** 54 E. 68th St.: "Sets, Series, and Ensembles in African Art" is about restoring individual pieces to the groups they were part of originally; for instance, five over-life-size statues that were once a single Urhobo shrine. Through Oct. 20. (Open daily except Mondays; opens Sundays at noon.) . . . **ryan,** 452 Columbus Ave., at 81st St.: Color-linocut prints and their proofs and preparatory drawings, primarily from the thirties, by artists associated with the Grosvenor Art School, in London, who found modern movements, such as Cubism and Vorticism, well suited to this medium. Through Sept. 26. (Tuesdays through Fridays, noon to 7; Saturdays, noon to 6; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Group Shows—At the **french embassy,** 972 Fifth Ave., at 78th St.: Fresson prints by thirteen photographers, including John Batho, Sheila Metzner, John Stewart, and Scott MacLeay. Through Friday, Aug. 30. . . . **international center of photography,** 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St.: Two exhibits of Soviet photojournalism—some prints used in the service of propaganda between 1917 and 1941, the rest showing the Russian front during the Second World War. Through Sept. 8. (Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.) . . . **light,** 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.: Photographs and works on paper, primarily completed in the past year by Robert Mapplethorpe, Barbara Kasten, Sheila Metzner, and others. Through Sept. 20. . . . **laurence miller,** 38 E. 57th St.: Self-portraits by Anne Rowland, Elizabeth Turk, Lee Friedlander, and others. Through Friday, Aug. 30. . . . **museum of modern art,** 11 W. 53rd St.: Black-and-white prints by four young Americans. For dates and times, see below under "Museums."

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—Landscapes of the American wilderness and portraits of the Indians who lived there done by Swiss artist Karl Bodmer during an expedition in the early eighteen-thirties. Through Oct. 6. . . . ¶ From the museum's collection of seventy pianos, a kind of genealogical selection—the oldest existing piano, built in 1720 by the instrument's inventor, Cristofori, and about thirty of its progeny; audioguides are available on which visitors can hear them being played. . . . ¶ Also from the collection, fifty-five Chinese figure paintings (silk and paper hanging scrolls, handscrolls, album leaves, and fans), dating from the eighth century to the seventeenth. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—A Kurt Schwitters retrospective that includes a comprehensive selection of collages by one of the first artists to use that form. Through Oct. 1. . . . ¶ Nearly sixty works on paper (not strictly) by six contemporary Americans: Robert Morris, Bruce Nauman, James Rosenquist, Robert Ryman, Pat Steir, and Robert Wilson. (Ryman has used anodized aluminum instead of paper.) Through Tuesday, Sept. 3. . . . ¶ A display of works by two European architects: Ricardo Bofill is represented by photographs of apartment buildings in France, and Leon Krier, who designs but does not build, is necessarily represented by drawings. Through Tuesday, Sept. 3. . . . ¶ A show of more than forty photographs by Zeke Berman, Antonio Mendoza, Judith Ross, and Michael Spano. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.) . . . **note:** The museum's sculpture garden, 14 W. 54th St., is open, free, Friday and Saturday, Aug. 30-31, from 6 to 10, for the final times this season. The Art Ensemble of Chicago will perform on Friday, Aug. 30 (rain date Saturday, Aug. 31), at 8.

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—A show of a hundred paintings which could be said to deliver a cram course in the principal styles used by American and European artists of the past forty years. From the museum's collections and from private donors. Through Tuesday, Sept. 3. (Open daily. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays and Labor Day, 11 to 5.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A selection of more than ninety of the drawings that have entered the collection over the past few years. Through Sept. 22. . . . ¶ A sixteen-foot-high abstract version of one of Michael Heizer's earthworks fills the fourth-floor gallery; it is constructed of corrugated cardboard. Through Sunday, Sept. 1. A complementary exhibit is at Xavier Fourcade, 36 E. 75th St. (The museum is open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—An exhibition of Japanese folk art. Through Sept. 30. (Open daily except Tuesdays. Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—Wood carvings, beaded wood sculptures, and ceremonial masks still used by Cameroon chiefs are among the objects on view from the West African nation. Through Oct. 15. (Open daily. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

Asia Society, 725 Park Ave., at 70th St.—A show devoted to seventeenth- to nineteenth-century Japanese painters who re-created supernatural figures in Japanese folklore—the Taoist Immortals, Shōki the Demon Queller, and Kabuki Ghosts among them. Paintings, scrolls, screens, etc. Organized by the Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas. Through Sunday, Sept. 1. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—An all-purpose exhibit about wine as a creative stimulant: Chalices, decanters, goblets, and vessels of every kind; wallpaper, prints, textiles, and other decorative objects using grapevine patterns. Also, equipment for harvesting and processing—for instance, a large copper-and-brass still from the Cognac region of France. Through Oct. 13. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—The bicentennial of Audubon's birth is cause for celebration at the society, which owns and has mounted all four hundred and thirty-three remaining original watercolors for "Birds of America." Through Sept. 14. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Fridays, 11 to 5; Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

ART AFTER DARK

(Performance, music, dance, video, film, and combinations thereof.)

Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin St. 925-4671—Betina (performance), Thursday, Sept. 5, at 8:30.

MUSIC

New York City Opera—Wednesday, Aug. 28, at 8: "Manon," with Faith Esham, Jerry Hadley, Alan Titus, and Jeffrey Wells; conducted by José Serebrier. . . . ¶ Thursday, Aug. 29, at 8: "Norma," with Olivia Stapp, Judith Forst, John Absalom, and Jeffrey Wells; Richard Bonynge. . . . ¶ Friday, Aug. 30, at 8; Saturday, Aug. 31, at 2; Sunday, Sept. 1, at 7; and Friday and Saturday, Sept. 6-7, at 8: "The

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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Merry Widow," with Leigh Munro, Susanne Marsee, Mark Thomsen, and Alan Titus; Imre Pallo. . . . ¶ Saturday, Aug. 31, at 8; Sunday, Sept. 1, at 1; and Saturday, Sept. 7, at 2: "The Merry Widow," with Claudia Cummings, Carol Sparrow, Cris Groenendaal, and Michael Cousins; Imre Pallo. . . . ¶ Thursday, Sept. 5, at 8: "Turandot," with Linda Kelm, Elizabeth Hynes, Jon Fredric West, and Harry Dworchak; Christopher Keene. (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through Sunday, Nov. 17.)

IN THE COUNTRY

TANGLEWOOD FESTIVAL—Final performances of the season—Thursday, Aug. 29, at 8:30: Håkan Hagegård, baritone, and Warren Jones, piano. . . . ¶ Friday, Aug. 30, at 7: The Empire Brass. . . . ¶ Friday, Aug. 30, at 9: Itzhak Perlman, violin, and Samuel Sanders, piano. . . . ¶ Saturday, Aug. 31, at 8:30: Seiji Ozawa conducting the Boston Symphony in a performance of Mahler's Ninth Symphony. . . . ¶ Sunday, Sept. 1, at 2:30: Seiji Ozawa conducting an all-Beethoven program, with Mr. Perlman. (Lenox, Mass. For information about tickets, call 1-413 637-1666.)

SARATOGA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER—Final concerts of the season—Wednesday, Aug. 28: Crosby, Stills & Nash. . . . ¶ Thursday, Aug. 29: Arlo Guthrie and Pete Seeger. . . . ¶ Friday, Aug. 30: George Benson. . . . ¶ Monday, Sept. 2: Rick Springfield. (Saratoga Springs. Evenings at 8:15. For information about tickets, call 977-9020, in New York.)

SPORTS

BASEBALL—At Yankee Stadium—Yankees vs. California, Thursday and Friday, Aug. 29-30, at 8; Saturday, Aug. 31, at 1; and Sunday, Sept. 1, at 2. . . . ¶ Yankees vs. Seattle, Monday, Sept. 2, at 1, and Tuesday and Wednesday, Sept. 3-4, at 8. . . . ¶ Oakland, Friday and Saturday, Sept. 6-7, at 8.

GOLF—U.S.G.A. Amateur Championship. (Montclair Golf Club, Montclair, N.J. Wednesday through Sunday, Aug. 28-Sept. 1.)

RACING—At BELMONT: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1, from Wednesday, Aug. 28, through Monday, Oct. 21. The Gazelle Handicap, Wednesday, Aug. 28; the Woodward, Saturday, Aug. 31; the Manhattan Handicap, Sunday, Sept. 1; the Jerome Handicap, Monday, Sept. 2; and the Maskette, Saturday, Sept. 7. (Frequent trains leave Penn Station for the track Wednesdays through Fridays between 10:53 and 12:59, and Saturdays, Sundays, and Labor Day between 10:58 and 1:04.) . . . MONMOUTH PARK, Oceanport, N.J.: Daily at 1:30; through Saturday, Aug. 31. . . . ATLANTIC CITY, Mays Landing, N.J.: Nightly at 8; through Saturday, Aug. 31. . . . MEADOWLANDS: Racing begins Monday, Sept. 2, and will run through Tuesday, Dec. 31. Post time will be 1:30 on Labor Day; thereafter, weeknights at 8.

TENNIS—United States Open Championships. (U.S.T.A. National Tennis Center, Flushing Meadow. Wednesday, Aug. 28, through Thursday, Sept. 5, at 11 and 7:30; Friday and Saturday, Sept. 6-7, at 11; and Sunday, Sept. 8, at noon. For information about tickets, call 1-718 271-5100.)

TROTTING—At YONKERS RACEWAY: Nightly at 8; through Sunday, Nov. 3. . . . SARATOGA RACEWAY, Saratoga Springs: Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Labor Day at 1:15; through Saturday, Nov. 23.

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

NEW YORK SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL—Final free performances of THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD, a musical by Rupert Holmes that was suggested by Charles Dickens' unfinished novel of the same name. With Betty Buckley, Cleo Laine, and George Rose. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Delacorte Theatre, Central Park near W. 81st St. Wednesday through Sunday, Aug. 28-Sept. 1, at 8. For information about tickets, call 861-7277.)

FLEET THEATRE COMPANY—Presenting performances of Shakespeare's "The Merchant of Venice." (Rotunda of the 79th Street Boat Basin, Riverside Park. Wednesdays through Sundays at 8. Through Sunday, Sept. 8. No tickets necessary.)

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC—Concerts in various city parks. Zubin Mehta will conduct the second in a series of three peripatetic programs (with Neil Shicoff, tenor): VAN CORTLANDT PARK, the Bronx, Wednesday, Aug. 28, at 8. . . . CENTRAL PARK'S GREAT LAWN, Monday, Sept. 2, at 8. . . . ¶ Mr. Mehta will conduct the final program: CROCHERON PARK, Queens, Sunday, Sept. 1, at 8.

MUSIC FESTIVAL ON THE PIER—The Miller beer people's summertime concerts. Thursday, Aug. 29, at 7:30: Squeeze, the Truth, and the Hooters. (Pier 84, Twelfth Ave. at 45th St. Through Saturday, Sept. 14. For information about tickets, call 249-8870.)

LINCOLN CENTER OUT-OF-DOORS—Final performances of a festival of dance, chamber music, country music, jazz, and street theatre. LINCOLN CENTER PLAZA: Wednesday, Aug. 28, the United Mime Workers of Illinois at 5, and the Twentieth Century Music Group at 6:15. . . . ¶ Thursday, Aug. 29, the Dave Valentin quartet at 12:15, and the Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre at 5. . . . ¶ Friday, Aug. 30, the Bread and Puppet Theatre, from Vermont, at 5. . . . ¶ Saturday, Aug. 31, Mini Events at noon, the Bread and Puppet Theatre at 2:30, and Dance 2000: The Felice Lesser Dance Theatre at 5. . . . ¶ Sunday, Sept. 1, Mini Events at noon, and Gallman's Newark Dance Theatre at 2:30. . . . ¶ Monday, Sept. 2, clown day, with programs at 11:30, noon, 2, 3, 4, and 5. . . . DAMROSCH PARK: Wednesday, Aug. 28, Condanceco at 8:15. . . . ¶ Friday, Aug. 30, Steven Richman conducting the Harmonie Wind Ensemble in a program featuring Handel's "Music for the Royal Fireworks," in its original instrumentation, at 8:15. . . . ¶ Saturday, Aug. 31, Arthur Hall's Afro-American Dance Ensemble at 8:15. . . . ¶ Sunday, Sept. 1, performances of Duke Ellington's Sacred Concerts, by members of the Brooklyn Philharmonic and guest artists, at 4 (rehearsal) and at 8:15. . . . ¶ Monday, Sept. 2, clown Bob Berky at 8:15. (For daily detailed information, call 877-2011.)

WASHINGTON SQUARE OUTDOOR ART EXHIBIT—The semiannual show will be on view Saturday through Monday, Aug. 31-Sept. 2; Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 7-8; and Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 14-15, from noon until sundown.

COMING EVENTS

(A listing for forehanded readers.)

AUTOMOBILE RACING—At Watkins Glen: Sept. 28-29.

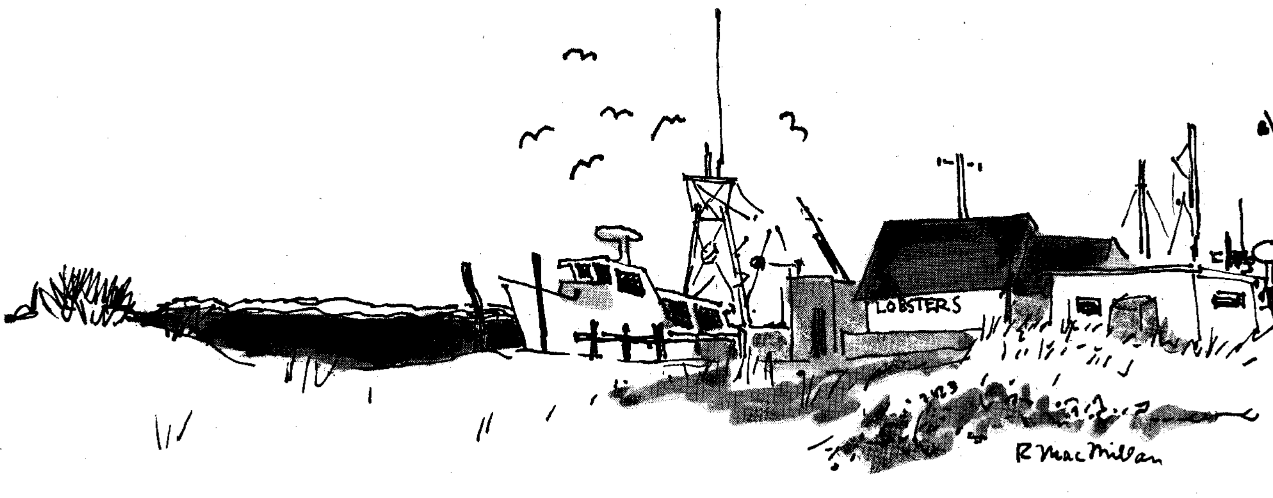
BASEBALL—League Championship Playoffs start Oct. 8.

PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL—At Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands: Giants vs. Philadelphia Eagles, Sept. 8. . . . ¶ Jets vs. Buffalo Bills, Sept. 15. . . . ¶ Giants vs. St. Louis Cardinals, Sept. 22. . . . ¶ Jets vs. Indianapolis Colts, Sept. 29. . . . ¶ Giants vs. Dallas Cowboys, Oct. 6

MUSIC—METROPOLITAN OPERA (362-6000): The season will open on Sept. 23, with Puccini's "Tosca," and will run through May 3. . . . AVERY FISHER HALL (874-2424): Opening performances of the New York Philharmonic, Zubin Mehta conducting, Sept. 11 (a nonsubscription benefit concert) and Sept. 12 (first concert of the regular season). . . . CARNEGIE HALL (247-7800): Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Sept. 21-22. . . . ¶ Vienna Philharmonic, Sept. 26-28. . . . ¶ Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam, Oct. 3-4. . . . ¶ Abbey Simon, piano, Oct. 6. . . . ¶ Philadelphia Orchestra, Oct. 8. . . . ¶ Boston Symphony, Oct. 9-11. . . . KAUFMANN CONCERT HALL, 92nd Street Y (427-4410): Jewish Opera at the Y, Oct. 5-6. . . . ¶ Hermann Prey, baritone, Oct. 9. . . . GRACE RAINEY ROGERS AUDITORIUM, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM (570-3949): Lockenhaus Festival, Oct. 3. . . . ¶ Guarneri Quartet, Oct. 5. . . . ¶ Rafael Puyana, harpsichord, Oct. 10.

THEATRE—Some productions scheduled to open during the next several weeks: "Song and Dance," a British musical composed by Andrew Lloyd Webber, with lyrics by Don Black, and starring Bernadette Peters. . . . ¶ Lily Tomlin in "The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe," a solo theatre piece, written by Jane Wagner. . . . ¶ A revival of Eugene O'Neill's play "The Iceman Cometh," with Jason Robards and Barnard Hughes.

OTHER DATES—Third-quarter Federal, New York State, and New York City income-tax payments are due Monday, Sept. 16. . . . ¶ The first day of fall is Sept. 22. . . . ¶ The New York Film Festival opens on Sept. 27 at Avery Fisher Hall and Alice Tully Hall, and then continues at Alice Tully Hall, Sept. 28-Oct. 12. Winds up at Avery Fisher Hall on Oct. 13.



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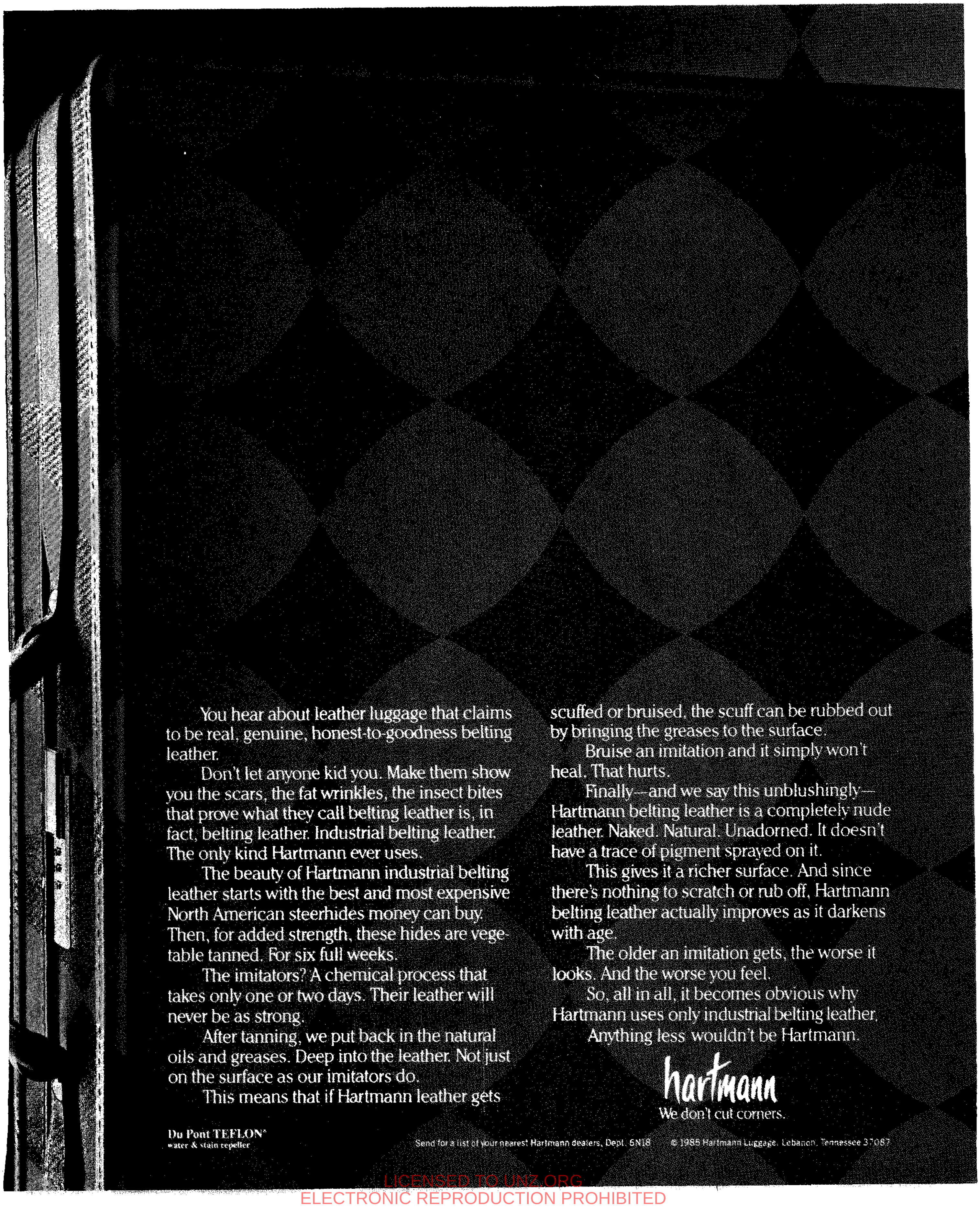

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Cabaret d'Automne
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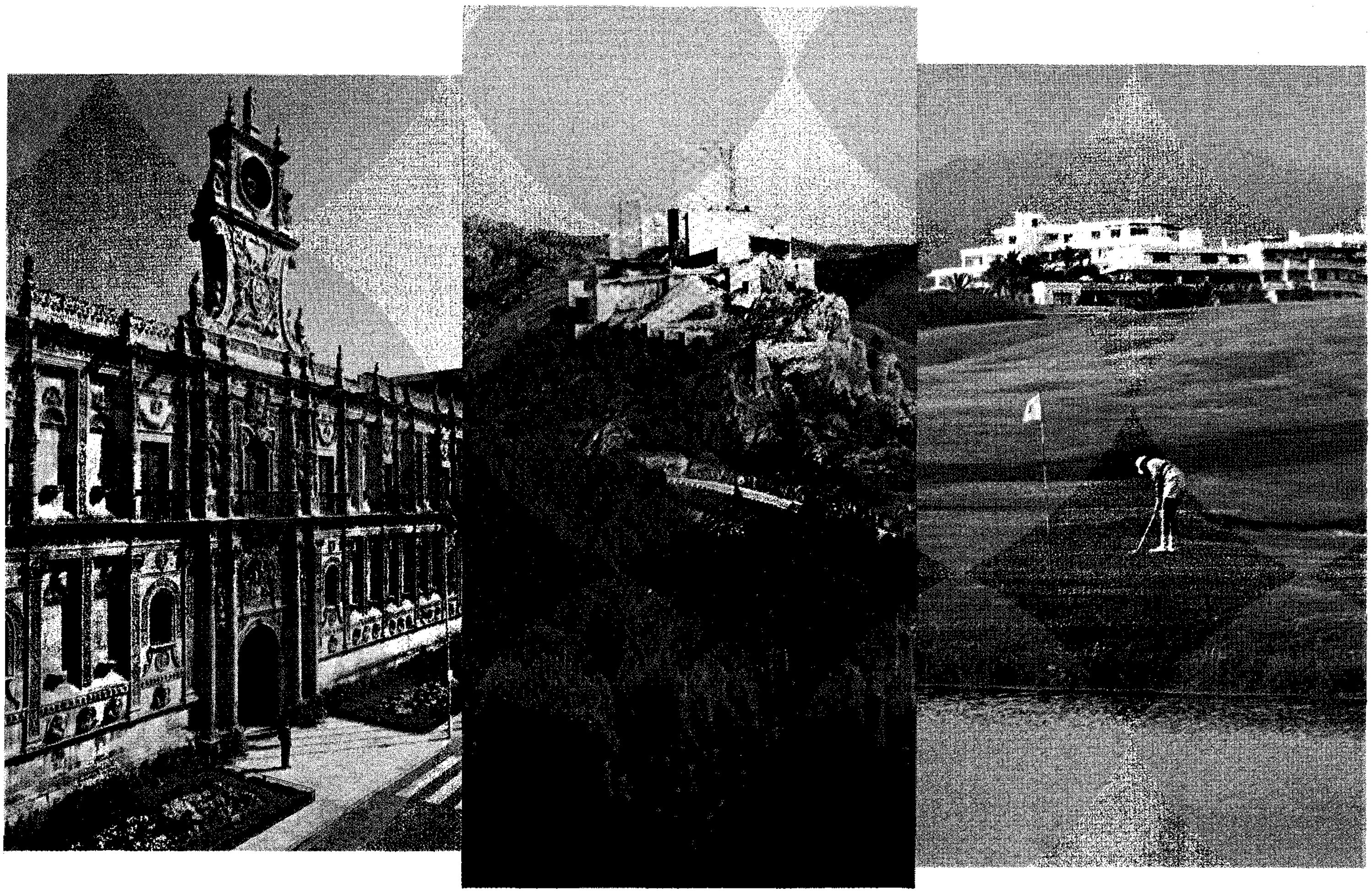
LANCÔME
PARIS

“In Spain you actually stay in place



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—Gail Berman
San Francisco, Cal.

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—John Cuneo
Hastings-on-Hudson, N.Y.

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—John Annunziata
New York, N.Y.

ıost people only dream about.”

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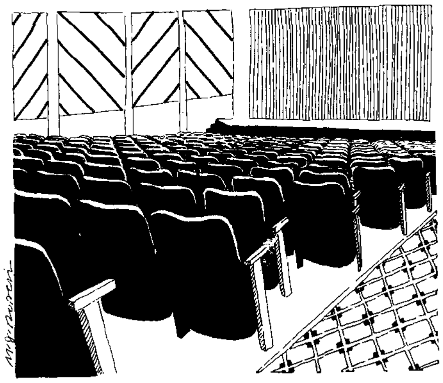
GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES



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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 18.

EAST SIDE

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
"Bar Esperanza" (directed by Hugo Carvana; a Brazilian film, in Portuguese), with Marília Pera.

R.K.O. Century Art, 36 E. 8th. (473-7014)
"Warning Sign" (Hal Barwood), with Sam Waterston and Yaphet Kotto.

New Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Key Exchange" (Barnet Kellman), with Brooke Adams and Ben Masters.

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Cocoon" (†).

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (685-7652)
"Pee-Wee's Big Adventure" (Tim Burton), with Pee-Wee Herman.

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Teen Wolf" (Rod Daniel), with Michael J. Fox.
Theatre 2: "Year of the Dragon" (Michael Cimino), with Mickey Rourke and John Lone.
Theatre 3: "Back to the Future" (†).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
Through Aug. 29: "Real Genius" (Martha Coolidge), with Val Kilmer.
From Aug. 30: To be announced.

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
Through Aug. 29: "Warning Sign" (Hal Barwood), with Sam Waterston and Yaphet Kotto.
From Aug. 30: To be announced.

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
"Key Exchange" (Barnet Kellman), with Brooke Adams and Ben Masters.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Cocoon" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"Insignificance" (Nicolas Roeg), with Gary Busey and Tony Curtis.

Manhattan I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "The Protector" (James Glickenhaus), with Jackie Chan.
Theatre 2: Through Aug. 29: "The Return of the Living Dead" (Dan O'Bannon), with Clu Gulager. From Aug. 30: "Gremlins" (†).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "The Bride" (Franc Roddam), with Sting and Jennifer Beals.
Theatre 2: "Silverado" (†).

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
Through Aug. 29: "Fright Night" (Tom Holland), with Chris Sarandon.
From Aug. 30: "The Emerald Forest" (†).

Cinema I and II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: "Kiss of the Spider Woman" (†).
Theatre 2: "Bullshot" (Dick Clement), with Ron House.

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Real Genius" (Martha Coolidge), with Val Kilmer.
Theatre 2: "Volunteers" (Nicholas Meyer), with Tom Hanks and John Candy.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"American Flyers" (John Badham), with Kevin Costner and David Grant.

Loews New York Twin I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Back to the Future" (†).
Theatre 2: "Teen Wolf" (Rod Daniel), with Michael J. Fox.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"The Gods Must Be Crazy" (1979; Jamie Uys).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
Through Aug. 29: "Pee-Wee's Big Adventure" (Tim Burton), with Pee-Wee Herman.
From Aug. 30: "Compromising Positions" (Frank Perry), with Susan Sarandon and Raul Julia.

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Volunteers" (Nicholas Meyer), with Tom Hanks and John Candy.

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: "Year of the Dragon" (Michael Cimino), with Mickey Rourke and John Lone.
Theatre 2: Through Aug. 29: "Summer Rental" (Carl Reiner), with John Candy and Richard Crenna. From Aug. 30: "Godzilla 1985."

86th St. East, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Through Aug. 29: "Fright Night" (Tom Holland), with Chris Sarandon.
From Aug. 30: "Gremlins" (†).

R.K.O. Century 86th St. Twin, Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)
Theatre 1: "The Protector" (James Glickenhaus), with Jackie Chan.
Theatre 2: Through Aug. 29: "Warning Sign" (Hal Barwood), with Sam Waterston and Yaphet Kotto. From Aug. 30: To be announced.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum I and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 3: "The Flaxfield" (1983; directed by Jan Gruyaert; in Flemish). From Sept. 4: A program of four short documentaries on twentieth-century photographers.
Theatre 2: Through Aug. 29: "The Emerald Forest" (†). From Aug. 30: "Eureka" (Nicolas Roeg), with Gene Hackman and Theresa Russell.

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Fright Night" (Tom Holland), with Chris Sarandon.
Theatre 2: "Volunteers" (Nicholas Meyer), with Tom Hanks and John Candy.

Greenwich Playhouse I and 2, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 29: "The Protector" (James Glickenhaus), with Jackie Chan. From Aug. 30: "Gremlins" (†).
Theatre 2: "Prizzi's Honor" (†).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 29: "The Home and the World" (Satyajit Ray; in Bengali), with Victor Banerjee. From Aug. 30: "Creepers" (Dario Argento), with Jennifer Connelly.
Theatre 2: "The Shooting Party" (†).
Theatre 3: Through Aug. 29: "The Return of the Living Dead" (Dan O'Bannon), with Clu Gulager. From Aug. 30: "Wetherby" (David Hare), with Vanessa Redgrave.
Theatre 4: "The Coca-Cola Kid" (Dusan Makavejev), with Eric Roberts.

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 29: "Real Genius" (Martha Coolidge), with Val Kilmer. From Aug. 30: "The Emerald Forest" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Aug. 29: "The Bride" (Franc Roddam), with Sting and Jennifer Beals. From Aug. 30: To be announced.
Theatre 3: "Silverado" (†).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Sesame Street Presents: Follow That Bird" (Ken Kwapis).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Ghostbusters" (†).

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (757-2715)
Through Aug. 29: "A Woman in Flames" (1984; Robert Van Ackeren; in German), with Gudrun Landgrebe; and "Trash" (1970; Paul Morrissey), with Joe Dallesandro and Holly Woodlawn.
Aug. 30-31: "Return of the Secaucus 7" (1980; John Sayles).
Sept. 1-3: "Swept Away" (†) and "Seven Beauties" (†).
Sept. 4-5: "Eraserhead" (†) and "The Honeymoon Killers" (†).
Sept. 6-7: "Meetings with Remarkable Men" (†).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Animals Are Beautiful People" (Jamie Uys).

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"Dance with a Stranger" (†).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Prizzi's Honor" (†).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
Through Aug. 29: "Wetherby" (David Hare), with Vanessa Redgrave.
From Aug. 30: "Compromising Positions" (Frank Perry), with Susan Sarandon and Raul Julia.

Lincoln Plaza I, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Détective" (Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Nathalie Baye, Claude Brasseur, Johnny Hallyday, and Jean-Pierre Léaud.
Theatre 2: "Dim Sum: A Little Bit of Heart" (Wayne Wang).
Theatre 3: Through Aug. 29: "Péril" (Michel Deville; in French), with Nicole Garcia and Michel Piccoli. From Aug. 30: "Wetherby" (David Hare), with Vanessa Redgrave.

Cinema Studio I and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "Crossover Dreams" (Leon Ichaso), with Ruben Blades.
Theatre 2: "Prizzi's Honor" (†).

Embassy 72nd St. I and 2, B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: "La Chèvre" (Francis Véber; in French), with Gérard Depardieu and Pierre Richard.
Theatre 2: "My Other Husband" (Georges Lautner; in French), with Miou-Miou, Roger Hanin, and Eddy Mitchell.

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Key Exchange" (Barnet Kellman), with Brooke Adams and Ben Masters.
Theatre 2: "Back to the Future" (†).
Theatre 3: Through Aug. 29: "Cocoon" (†). From Aug. 30: "Compromising Positions" (Frank Perry), with Susan Sarandon and Raul Julia.
Theatre 4: "Teen Wolf" (Rod Daniel), with Michael J. Fox.
Theatre 5: "Pee-Wee's Big Adventure" (Tim Burton), with Pee-Wee Herman.
Theatre 6: "Year of the Dragon" (Michael Cimino), with Mickey Rourke and John Lone.

Metro Cinema, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
"Volunteers" (Nicholas Meyer), with Tom Hanks and John Candy.

Olympia Quad, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "Year of the Dragon" (Michael Cimino), with Mickey Rourke and John Lone.
Theatre 2: Through Aug. 29: "The Return of the Living Dead" (Dan O'Bannon), with Clu Gulager. From Aug. 30: "American Ninja" (Sam Firstenberg), with Michael Dudikoff.
Theatre 3: Through Aug. 29: "Teen Wolf" (Rod Daniel), with Michael J. Fox. From Aug. 30: "Teen Wolf" and "The Return of the Living Dead."
Theatre 4: Through Aug. 29: "The Bride" (Franc Roddam), with Sting and Jennifer Beals. From Aug. 30: "Creepers" (Dario Argento), with Jennifer Connelly.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Theatres, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "National Lampoon's European

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Vacation" (directed by Amy Heckerling), with Chevy Chase.

Theatre 2: "Cocoon" (†).

Theatre 3: Through Aug. 29: "Warning Sign (Hal Barwood), with Sam Waterston and Yaphet Kotto. From Aug. 30: "Gremlins" (†).

Theatre 4: "Real Genius" (Martha Coolidge), with Val Kilmer.

Theatre 5: "Rambo: First Blood Part II" (†).

Theatre 6: "Weird Science" (John Hughes), with Anthony Michael Hall.

EMBASSY 1, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)

Through Aug. 29: "Silverado" (†).

From Aug. 30: "The Black Cauldron," an animated film.

EMBASSY 2, 3, AND 4, B'way at 47th St. (730-7262)

Theatre 2: Through Aug. 29: "Prizzi's Honor" (†). From Aug. 30: "Silverado" (†).

Theatre 3: "The Emerald Forest" (†).

Theatre 4: "Summer Rental" (Carl Reiner), with John Candy and Richard Crenna.

LOEWS ASTOR PLAZA, B'way at 44th. (869-8340)

"Year of the Dragon" (Michael Cimino), with Mickey Rourke and John Lone.

LOEWS STATE 1 AND 2, B'way at 45th. (575-5060)

Theatre 1: "Back to the Future" (†).

Theatre 2: "Teen Wolf" (Rod Daniel), with Michael J. Fox.

MOVIELAND, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)

"The Return of the Living Dead" (Dan O'Bannon), with Clu Gulager.

NEW EMBASSY 49TH STREET, Seventh Ave. at 49th. (757-7003)

"Beverly Hills Cop" (†).

R.K.O. CENTURY NATIONAL TWIN, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)

Theatre 1: Through Aug. 29: "The Bride" (Frank Roddam), with Sting and Jennifer Beals. From Aug. 30: "Godzilla 1985."

Theatre 2: "Pee-Wee's Big Adventure" (Tim Burton), with Pee-Wee Herman.

R.K.O. CENTURY WARNER TWIN, B'way at 47th. (975-8369)

Theatre 1: Through Aug. 29: "Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome" (George Miller and George Ogilvie), with Mel Gibson. From Aug. 30: "Creepers" (Dario Argento), with Jennifer Connelly.

Theatre 2: "The Protector" (James Glickenhaus), with Jackie Chan.

U. A. TWIN 1 AND 2, B'way at 49th. (247-1635)

Theatre 1: Through Aug. 29: "Volunteers" (Nicholas Meyer), with Tom Hanks and John Candy. From Aug. 30: "American Ninja" (Sam Firstenberg), with Michael Dudikoff.

Theatre 2: Through Aug. 29: "Fright Night" (Tom Holland), with Chris Sarandon. From Aug. 30: To be announced.

REVIVAL HOUSES

AGEE ROOM, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560; on Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)

Through Sept. 5: A program of jazz films.

From Sept. 6: "Kerouac, The Movie" (1985; directed by John Antonelli).

BLEECKER ST. CINEMA, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560; on Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)

Aug. 28: "The Importance of Being Earnest" (1952; Anthony Asquith), with Michael Redgrave, Joan Greenwood, Edith Evans, and Margaret Rutherford; and "Pygmalion" (1938; Anthony Asquith and Leslie Howard), with Howard and Wendy Hiller.

Aug. 29: "Umberto D." (1952; Vittorio De Sica; in Italian); and "Miracle in Milan" (1951; Vittorio De Sica; in Italian), with Francesco Golissano, Brunella Bovo, Paolo Stoppa, and Emma Gramatica.

Aug. 30-Sept. 2: "La Strada" (1954; Federico Fellini; in Italian), with Anthony Quinn, Richard Basehart, and Giulietta Masina; and "Juliet of the Spirits" (1965; Federico Fellini; in Italian), with Giulietta Masina.

Sept. 3: "The Horse's Mouth" (1958; Ronald Neame), with Alec Guinness, Kay Walsh, and Ernest Thesiger; and "Kind Hearts and Coronets" (1950; Robert Hamer), with Alec Guinness, Valerie Hobson, and Dennis Price.

Sept. 4: "M" (1932; Fritz Lang; in German), with Peter Lorre; and "The Lost One" (1951; Peter Lorre; in German), with Lorre.

Sept. 5: "The Rules of the Game" (1939; Jean Renoir; in French), with Marcel Dalio and Nora Gregor; and "La Grande Illusion" (1937; Jean Renoir; in French), with Erich von Stroheim, Jean Gabin, Pierre Fresnay, and Marcel Dalio.

Sept. 6-7: "Black Orpheus" (1959; Marcel Camus; in Portuguese), with Marpessa Dawn; and "Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors" (1964; Sergei Paradjanov; in Ukrainian).

CARNEGIE HALL CINEMA, 7th Ave. at 57th. (757-2131)

Aug. 28: "Viridiana" (1961; Luis Buñuel; in Spanish), with Francisco Rabal and Silvia Pinal; and "Nazarin" (1958; Luis Buñuel; in Spanish), with Francisco Rabal.

Aug. 29: "Ikiru" (1952; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Takashi Shimura; and "The Men Who Tread on the Tiger's Tail" (1945; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese).

Aug. 30-31: "The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie" (1972; Luis Buñuel; in French), with Fernando Rey, Stéphane Audran, and Delphine Seyrig; and "That Obscure Object of Desire" (1977; Luis Buñuel; in French), with Fernando Rey, Carole Bouquet, and Angela Molina.

Sept. 1: "The Leopard" (1963; Luchino Visconti; in Italian), with Burt Lancaster, Alain Delon, and Claudia Cardinale.

Sept. 2: "Children of Paradise" (1945; Marcel Carné; in French), with Jean-Louis Barrault, Arletty, Pierre Brasseur, and Maria Casarès.

Sept. 3: "Romeo and Juliet" (1968 †); and "Brother Sun, Sister Moon" (1973; Franco Zeffirelli), with Graham Faulkner as Francis of Assisi.

Sept. 4: "The Tenant" (1976; Roman Polanski), with Polanski; and "Chinatown" (1974; Roman Polanski), with Jack Nicholson, Faye Dunaway, and John Huston.

Sept. 5: "Kill!" (†); and "The Sword of Doom" (1967; Kihachi Okamoto; in Japanese), with Tatsuya Nakadai.

Sept. 6-7: "Yojimbo" (1961) and "Throne of Blood" (1957), both films in Japanese, directed by Akira Kurosawa, with Toshiro Mifune.

CINEMA VILLAGE, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)

Through Aug. 29: "Dr. Strangelove" (1964; Stanley Kubrick), with Peter Sellers, George C. Scott, and Sterling Hayden; and "The Mouse That Roared" (1959; Jack Arnold), with Peter Sellers, Jean Seberg, and David Kossoff.

Aug. 30-31: "Days of Heaven" (1978; Terrence Malick), with Richard Gere, Brooke Adams, Sam Shepard, Linda Manz, and Robert Wilke; and "Badlands" (1973; Terrence Malick), with Martin Sheen and Sissy Spacek.

Sept. 1: "Barry Lyndon" (1975; Stanley Kubrick), with Ryan O'Neal and Marisa Berenson.

Sept. 2-3: "Last Tango in Paris" (1972; Bernardo Bertolucci; in French and English), with Marlon Brando and Maria Schneider; and "A Man and a Woman" (†).

Sept. 4-5: "Chariots of Fire" (1981; Hugh Hudson), with Ben Cross and Ian Charleson; and "Careful, He Might Hear You" (1984; Carl Schultz; an Australian film), with Wendy Hughes and Robyn Nevin.

Sept. 6-7: "Das Boot" (1982; Wolfgang Petersen; in German); and "The Tin Drum" (1980; Volker Schlöndorff; in German), with David Bennent.

8TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)

Through Aug. 29: "Koyaanisqatsi" (1983; Godfrey Reggio).

From Aug. 30: "Godzilla 1985."

HOLLYWOOD TWIN CINEMA 1, 8th Ave. at 47th. (246-0717)

Aug. 28: "The War Lord" (1965; Franklin Schaffner), with Charlton Heston and Richard Boone; and "El Cid" (1961; Anthony Mann), with Charlton Heston, Sophia Loren, and Raf Vallone.

Aug. 29-31: "Under Fire" (1983; Roger Spottiswoode), with Nick Nolte, Gene Hackman, and Joanna Cassidy; and "The Killing Fields" (1984; Roland Joffé), with Sam Waterston and Haing S. Ngor.

Sept. 1-2: "Gone with the Wind" (1939; Victor Fleming), with Vivien Leigh and Clark Gable.

Sept. 3-4: "Dressed to Kill" (1980 †) and "Blow Out" (†).

Sept. 5-7: "The Purple Rose of Cairo" (1985; Woody Allen), with Mia Farrow, Jeff Daniels, and Danny Aiello; and "Broadway Danny Rose" (1984; Woody Allen), with Allen, Mia Farrow, and Nick Apollo Forte.

HOLLYWOOD TWIN CINEMA 2, 8th Ave. at 47th. (246-0717)

Through Aug. 29: "S.O.B." (1981; Blake Edwards), with Julie Andrews, William Holden, and Robert Preston; and "Victor/Victoria" (1982; Blake Edwards), with Julie Andrews, James Garner, Robert Preston, Lesley Ann Warren, and Alex Karras.

Aug. 30-31: "The Grey Fox" (1983; Phillip Borsos), with Richard Farnsworth; and "The Draughtsman's Contract" (1983; Peter Greenaway), with Anthony Higgins and Janet Suzman.

Sept. 1: "Fanny and Alexander" (1983; Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish).

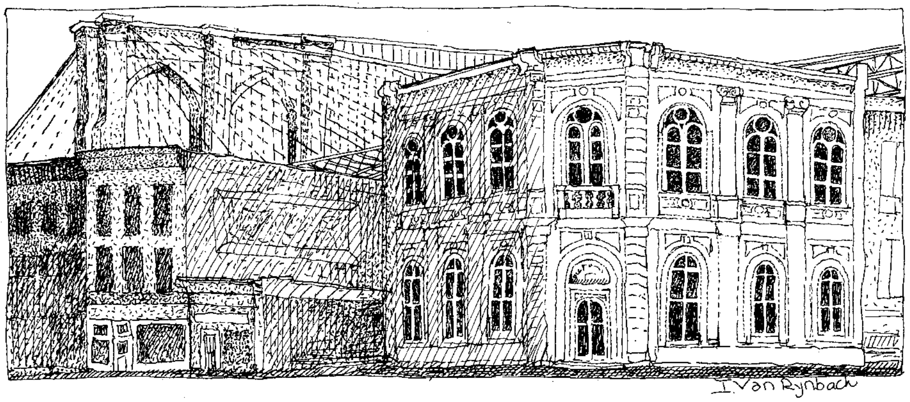
Sept. 2-3: "An Officer and a Gentleman" (1982; Taylor Hackford), with Richard Gere, Debra Winger, and Louis Gossett, Jr.; and "The Cotton Club" (1984; Francis Coppola), with Richard Gere, Gregory Hines, Nicolas Cage, and Maurice Hines.

Sept. 4-5: "Zabriskie Point" (†); and "Blow-Up" (1966; Michelangelo Antonioni), with Vanessa Redgrave and David Hemmings.

Sept. 6-7: "Breaker Morant" (1980; Bruce Beresford; an Australian film), with Edward Woodward; and "Gallipoli" (1981; Peter Weir; an Australian film), with Mel Gibson, Mark Lee, and Bill Kerr.

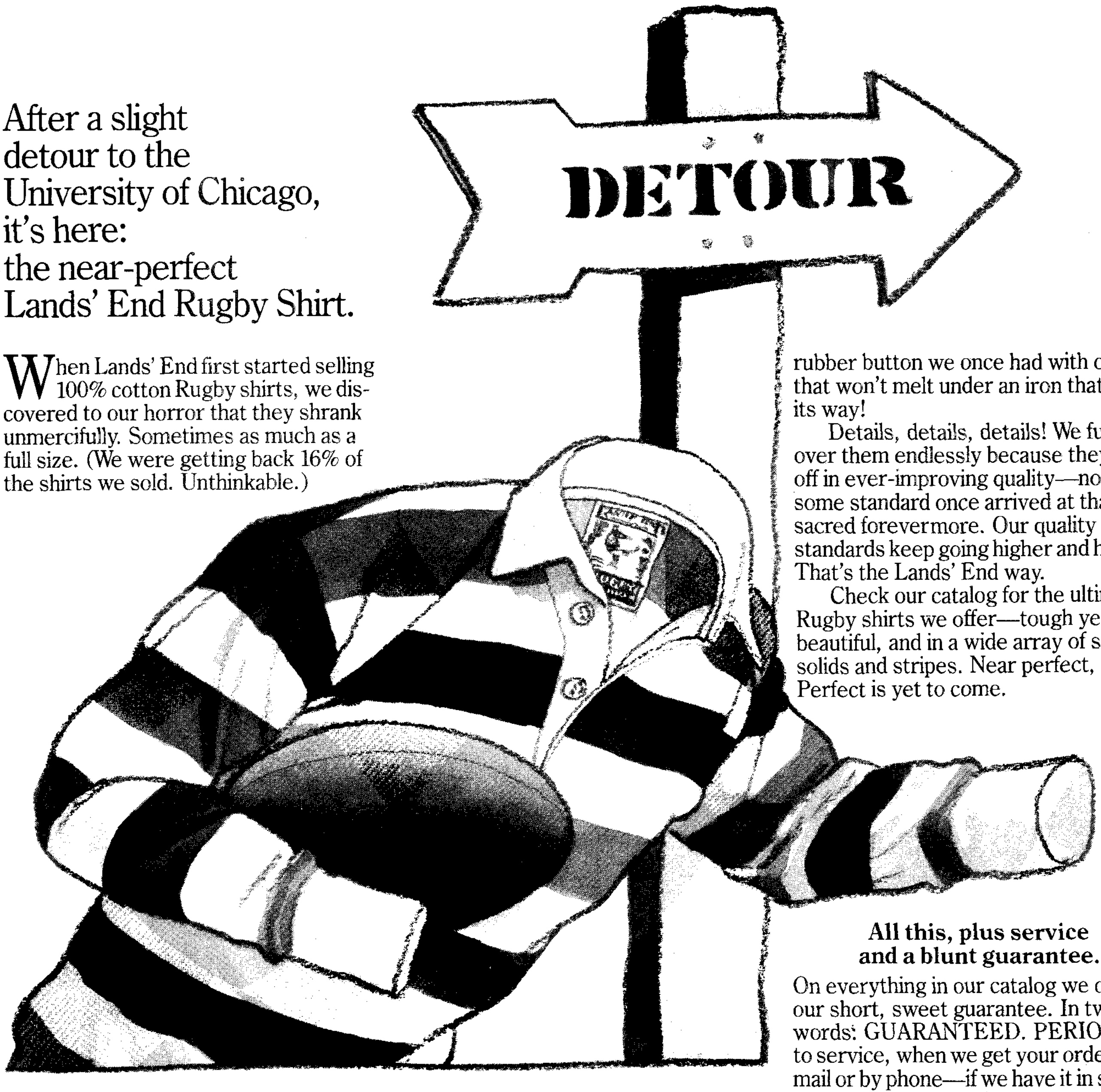
REGENCY, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

Aug. 28: "Kid Galahad" (1937; Michael Curtiz), with Bette Davis, Edward G. Robinson, and Humphrey Bogart; and "The Harder They Fall" (1956; Mark Robson),



I. Van Rynbach

After a slight detour to the University of Chicago, it's here: the near-perfect Lands' End Rugby Shirt.



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with Humphrey Bogart and Rod Steiger.

Aug. 29-31: "Sabrina" (1954; Billy Wilder), with Humphrey Bogart, Audrey Hepburn, and William Holden; and "The Caine Mutiny" (1954; Edward Dmytryk), with Humphrey Bogart.

Sept. 1-3: "The Treasure of Sierra Madre" (1948; John Huston), with Walter Huston, Humphrey Bogart, Tim Holt, Alfonso Bedoya, and Robert Blake; and "The African Queen" (†).

Sept. 4: "Black Legion" (†) and "All Through the Night" (†).

Sept. 5: "Angels with Dirty Faces" (†) and "Knock on Any Door" (†).

Sept. 6-7: "They Drive by Night" (†); and "It All Came True" (1940; Lewis Seiler), with Ann Sheridan, Jeffrey Lynn, and Humphrey Bogart.

Thalia, B'way at 95th. (222-3370)

Aug. 28: "Picnic on the Grass" (1959; Jean Renoir; in French), with Paul Meurisse; and "The Little Theatre of Jean Renoir" (1969; Jean Renoir; in French).

Aug. 29: A program of Nadine Gordimer stories: "Oral History" and "A Chip of Glass Ruby."

Aug. 30: "Monty Python and the Holy Grail" (1975), performed by the BBC-TV Python team; and "Carry On Nurse" (1960; Gerald Thomas), with Wilfrid Hyde-White and Shirley Eaton.

Aug. 31: "Small Change" (1976; François Truffaut; in French), with Geory Desmouceaux; and "Love on the Run" (1979; François Truffaut; in French), with Jean-Pierre Léaud, Marie-France Pisier, and Claude Jade.

Sept. 1-2: "The Mad Adventures of 'Rabbi' Jacob" (1973; Gérard Oury; in French), with Louis de Funès; and "The Tall Blond Man with One Black Shoe" (†).

Sept. 3: "The Human Comedy" (†) and "The Time of Your Life" (†).

Sept. 4: "That Hamilton Woman!" (1941; Alexander Korda), with Vivien Leigh and Laurence Olivier; and "The Divorce of Lady X" (†).

Sept. 5: "Time Stands Still" (1982; Péter Gothár; in Hungarian); and "American Hot Wax" (†).

Sept. 6-7: "The French Lieutenant's Woman" (1981; Karel Reisz), with Meryl Streep and Jeremy Irons; and "Betrayal" (1983; David Jones), with Jeremy Irons, Ben Kingsley, and Patricia Hodge.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

Aug. 28: "Dames" (1934; Ray Enright), with Dick Powell, Ruby Keeler, and Joan Blondell; and "Wonder Bar" (1934; Lloyd Bacon), with Al Jolson, Kay Francis, and Dick Powell.

Aug. 29: "The Crowd Roars" (1932; Howard Hawks), with James Cagney and Joan Blondell; and "Jimmy the Gent" (1934; Michael Curtiz), with James Cagney and Bette Davis.

Aug. 30-31: "The Blue Gardenia" (1953; Fritz Lang), with Anne Baxter, Richard Conte, and Ann Sothern; and "The Woman in the Window" (1944; Fritz Lang), with Edward G. Robinson, Joan Bennett, and Dan Duryea.

Sept. 1: "The Innocents" (1961; Jack Clayton), with Deborah Kerr; and "The Uninvited" (†).

Sept. 2: "Ninotchka" (†); and "That Uncertain Feeling" (1941; Ernst Lubitsch), with Merle Oberon, Melvyn Douglas, and Burgess Meredith.

Sept. 3: "Beast of the City" (1932; Charles Brabin), with Jean Harlow and Walter Huston; and "Secret Six" (†).

Sept. 4: "The Tenant" (1976; Roman Polanski), with Polanski; and "Knife in the Water" (1962; Roman Polanski; in Polish).

Sept. 5: "Beyond a Reasonable Doubt" (1956; Fritz Lang), with Dana Andrews and Joan Fontaine; and "The Big Heat" (1953; Fritz Lang), with Glenn Ford, Gloria Grahame, Alexander Scourby, and Lee Marvin.

Sept. 6-7: "Easy Rider" (1969; Dennis Hopper), with Peter Fonda, Hopper, and Jack Nicholson; and "Five Easy Pieces" (1970; Bob Rafelson), with Jack Nicholson.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490; a limited number of tickets are available to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

Theatre 1: Aug. 29 at 2:30: "The Story of Adèle H." (1975; directed by François Truffaut; *in French, with English subtitles*), with Isabelle Adjani. . . . ¶ Aug. 29 at 6: "Céline and Julie Go Boating" (1974; Jacques Rivette; in French, with English subtitles), with Juliet Berto. . . . ¶ Aug. 30 at 2:30: "Ali: Fear Eats the Soul" (1974; Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Aug. 30 at 6: "Germany in Autumn" (1978; by eleven directors; in German, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Aug. 31 at 2: "Gloria" (1980; John Cassavetes), with Gena Rowlands and Buck Henry. . . . ¶ Aug. 31 at 5: "Pixote" (1981; Hector Babenco; a Brazilian film, in Portuguese, with English subtitles), with Marília Pera. . . . ¶ Sept. 1 at 2: "Céline and Julie Go Boating." . . . ¶ Sept. 1 at 5: "Chan Is Missing" (1981; Wayne Wang). . . . ¶ Sept. 2 at 2:30: "Gloria." . . . ¶ Sept. 2 at 6: "Tightrope" (1984; Richard Tuggle), with Clint Eastwood and Geneviève Bujold. . . . ¶ Sept. 3 at 2:30: "The Deer Hunter" (1978; Michael Cimino), with Robert De Niro, Christopher Walken, John Savage, and Meryl Streep. . . . ¶ Sept. 3 at 6: "Germany in Autumn." . . . ¶ Sept. 5 at 2:30: "Tightrope." . . . ¶ Sept. 5 at 6: "The Deer Hunter." . . . ¶ Sept. 6 at 2:30: "S.O.B." (1981; Blake Edwards), with Julie Andrews, William Holden, and Robert Preston. . . . ¶ Sept. 6 at 6: "Local Hero" (1983; Bill Forsyth), with Burt Lancaster and Peter Riegert. . . . ¶ Sept. 7 at 2: "The Conversation" (1974; Francis Ford Coppola), with Gene Hackman. . . . ¶ Sept. 7 at 5: "Chan Is Missing."

Theatre 2: Sept. 1 at 2:30: "The Secret Cinema" (1966; Paul Bartel); and "The Projectionist" (1970; Harry Hurwitz), with Chuck McCann, Ina Balin, and Rodney Dangerfield. . . . ¶ Sept. 1 at 5:30: "The Immoral Mr. Teas" (1960; Russ Meyer). . . . ¶ Sept. 2 at 3: "Who's That Knocking at My Door" (1968; Martin Scorsese), with Zina Bethune and Harvey Keitel. . . . ¶ Sept. 2 at 6:30: "Hallelujah the Hills" (1963; Adolfas Mekas), with Taylor Mead. . . . ¶ Sept. 3 at 3: "The Secret Cinema" and "The Projectionist." . . . ¶ Sept. 3 at 6:30: "Dementia 13" (1963; Francis Ford Coppola), with William Campbell and Luana Anders. . . . ¶ Sept. 5 at 3: "Shakespeare Wallah" (1965; James Ivory), with Shashi Kapoor, Felicity Kendal, and Madhur Jaffrey. . . . ¶ Sept. 5 at 6:30: "King: A Filmed Record . . . Montgomery to Memphis" (1970; Ely Landau). . . . ¶ Sept. 6 at 3: "Ice" (1970; Robert Kramer). . . . ¶ Sept. 6 at 6:30: "Who's That Knocking at My Door." . . . ¶ Sept. 7 at 2:30: "Dementia 13." . . . ¶ Sept. 7 at 5:30: "Night of the Living Dead" (1968; George Romero).

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN THESE PAGES DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

The African Queen (1951)—This is a comedy, a love story, and a tale of adventure, and it is one of the most charming and entertaining movies ever made. The director, John Huston, has written that the comedy was not present either in the novel by C. S. Forester or in the original screenplay but that it grew out of the relationship of Katharine Hepburn and Humphrey Bogart, who were just naturally funny when they worked together. The story, set in central Africa in 1914, is so convincingly acted that you may feel a bit jarred at the end; after the lovers have brought the boat, the African Queen, over dangerous rapids to torpedo a German warship, Huston seems to stop taking the movie seriously. With Robert Morley as Hepburn's missionary brother, and Peter Bull. (Regency; Sept. 1-3.)

All Through the Night (1942)—Some people might think this is one of the good Humphrey Bogart pictures they've missed; on the contrary, it's a sugarcoated anti-Nazi message comedy, and so negligible that you've forgotten it ten minutes after you've staggered out. Directed (ineptly) by Vincent Sherman, it's set in New York (a studio version) during the Second World War. Bogart is Gloves Donohue, a Broadway gambler-promoter, and he and his bunch of meant-to-be-lovable Damon Runyonesque semi-racketeers rout an entire Nazi Fifth Column organization, headed by Conrad Veidt, Judith Anderson, and Peter Lorre, who operate under cover of an antiques-auction business. This movie oozes sentimentality, and the coy, frolicsome music is like a TV laugh track. With Frank McHugh, William Demarest, Jackie Gleason, Jane Darwell, Phil Silvers, and Kaaren Verne. (Regency; Sept. 4.)

American Hot Wax (1978)—Cheerfully, trashily enjoyable, even though the hero, the disc jockey Alan Freed (well played by Tim McIntire), is made so righteous that he's like Buford Pusser fighting the enemies of rock 'n' roll. The moviemakers (the director Floyd Mutrux, the producer Art Linson, the screenwriter John Kaye) should have had more trust in the fifties rock milieu and in their own talents. This is a super B movie. With Fran Drescher, Jay Leno, Laraine Newman, Chuck Berry, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Moosie Drier as the twelve-year-old president of the Buddy Holly Fan Club. (Thalia; Sept. 5.)

Angels with Dirty Faces (1938)—An entertaining picture lurks behind that uninviting title. Warners threw its assets together in this one: James Cagney at his cockiest as a gangster, Pat O'Brien as a priest, and Humphrey Bogart, Ann Sheridan, George Bancroft, and the Dead End Kids, too. It has jokes and romance and a smashing big last sequence on Death Row—the priest asks the gangster to act cowardly when he's executed, so that he won't be a hero to the Dead End Kids, and Cagney comes through with a rousing finale. Michael Curtiz directed. (Regency; Sept. 5.)

Back to the Future—Directed by Robert Zemeckis, this piece of Pop Art Americana is a clever, generally engaging screwball comedy. Christopher Lloyd is the small-town crackpot inventor who builds a time machine, and Michael J. Fox is Marty, the seventeen-year-old high-school boy who is hurtled back thirty years to 1955, where his parents are seventeen-year-olds at the same school. The movie has the structure of a comedy classic, but it doesn't have the rambunctiousness or the maniacal edge; the thinking is cramped and conventional. With Lea Thompson and Crispin Glover. (Reviewed in our issue of 7/29/85.) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Loews State.)

Beverly Hills Cop—The plot is just a peg for little set pieces in which the street-smart Eddie Murphy, in his worn-out sweatshirts, saunters through swank Beverly Hills locations, tells whopping lies, and outsmarts the white dumbos. Hotfooting the picture to keep it going, he rattles off pitifully undistinguished profanity, but we're cued to react to every stupid four-letter word as riotous. With Judge Reinhold, Stephen Elliott, Bronson Pinchot, Ronny Cox, Steven Berkoff, Lisa Eilbacher, and John Ashton. Directed by Martin Brest. (12/24/84) (New Embassy 49th Street.)

Black Legion (1936)—In 1936, there were press accounts that a new Klan had sprung up, selecting Jews, Catholics, and Communists as its targets, and Warners, always eager for topical stories, leaped in. In the movie, the organization is against foreigners in general, and Humphrey Bogart is the young factory worker who joins up in anger because a Pole got the job he wanted. Though the film flaunts its cautionary message and assumes a virtuous, civics-lesson stance, the story is tacky and primitive. Archie Mayo directed; with Ann Sheridan, Erin O'Brien-Moore, and Dick Foran. (Regency; Sept. 4.)

Blow Out (1981)—John Travolta is Jack, a sound-effects man who happens to record the noise of a car speeding across a bridge, a shot, a blowout, and the crash of the car to the water below. The driver—the governor who is the most popular candidate for the Presidency—is dead, but Jack is able to rescue the governor's passenger, a cuddly blonde (Nancy Allen). On paper, this movie, written and directed by Brian De Palma, might seem to be just a political thriller, but it has a rapt intensity that makes it unlike any other political thriller. It's a great movie. With John Lithgow, Dennis Franz, and Deborah Everton. (Hollywood Twin Cinema 1; Sept. 3-4.)

Cocoon—A science-fantasy sitcom, in which the old people from a retirement community go off to the planet Antares, a Shangri-La in space. If audiences enjoy the movie, it's largely because of the elderly actors and the affection that the young director, Ron Howard, shows for them. But Howard keeps trying to extract tender emotions from scenes that could get by only as slapstick, and from scenes that can't get by as anything. The plot is less than ingenious, and things get pretty cloying. With Wilford Brimley, Don Ameche, Hume Cronyn, Jack Gilford, Maureen Stapleton, Gwen Verdon, Jessica Tandy, Herta Ware, Steve Guttenberg, Barret Oliver, and Brian Dennehy. (7/15/85) (Bay Cinema, Gotham Cinema, and Criterion Theatres. . . . ¶ Loews 84th Street Sixplex; through Aug. 29.)

Dance with a Stranger—Set in London in 1954 and 1955, and featuring Miranda Richardson as Ruth Ellis, the demi-prostitute who put a few slugs in her weakling young lover (played by Rupert Everett), and was the last woman in England to be sent to the gallows, this English film might be described as kitchen-sink *film noir*. Working from a no-nonsense script by Shelagh Delaney, the director, Mike Newell, doesn't give you a minute's relief. He's obviously biting off a serious theme—he might be chewing on tinfoil. Trying for an unsentimental look at England's cold hypocrisy about class and sex, he seems mortally afraid of light. He shoots in dim, smoky interiors, in a color range from olive-drab to gray. The picture is assaultingly cramped and monotonous; it's all style—style used to show us the shabbiness of the characters' lives and how they're all trapped, doing what's inevitable. Miranda Richardson's hard-edged, snippy performance took a lot of technique, and you see it all. She acts as if every cell in her body were overstimulated; she can't stop acting, even when a viewer is begging her to, hoping for a glimpse of something besides white-knuckled control. With Ian Holm. (8/26/85) (Paris.)

The Divorce of Lady X (1937)—Expensively produced attempt at a sophisticated romantic comedy; it's rather foolish and a little draggy, and is mainly of interest because of the cast—Laurence Olivier, Merle Oberon, Ralph Richardson, Binnie Barnes. They don't do much in the way of acting, but their arch romping is, at least, a curiosity. Tim Whelan directed. (Thalia; Sept. 4.)

Dressed to Kill (1980)—One of the most sheerly enjoyable films of recent years, this sophisticated horror comedy, written and directed by Brian De Palma, is permeated with the distilled essence of impure thoughts. Set in Manhattan, it's about sex and fear. Angie Dickinson, as a beautiful aging golden blonde, shows a much warmer expressive range than might be expected: she's married yet frustrated, and longing to be made love to; Michael Caine brings fine, precise shadings of ambiguity to the role of her analyst. With Nancy Allen, Keith Gordon, and Dennis Franz. (Hollywood Twin Cinema 1; Sept. 3-4.)

The Emerald Forest—John Boorman sets his story in Brazil, where the son of an American engineer (played by Powers Boothe) is abducted by an Amazon-rain-forest tribe. For ten years, the father searches for the boy in whatever time he can take off from his job of building a giant dam. When, at last, he locates his seventeen-year-old son (played by the director's son, Charley Boorman), he realizes that the boy's consciousness surpasses his own and that the boy's life is superior to anything civilization has to offer. And soon the father realizes that the dam is destroying the boy's tribe. The faults that have plagued Boorman's films—his lack of interest in character, his rather lordly failure to dramatize the issues that excite him the most, his wacko ear for dialogue—really pile up this time, and he doesn't seem able to get any kind of seductive flow going. With Rui Polonah, Meg Foster, Dira Paes, and Eduardo Conde. (8/12/85) (Embassy. . . . ¶ Film

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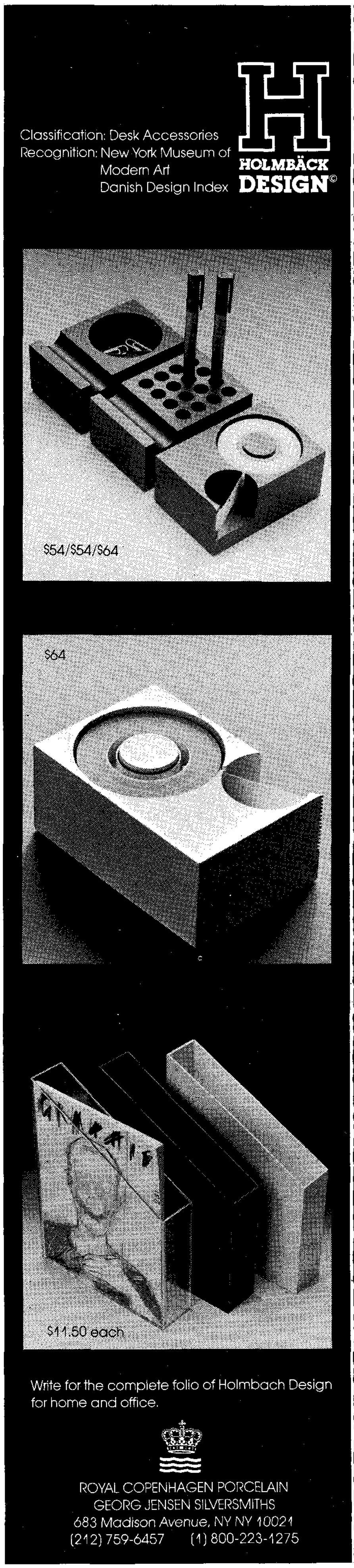

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Forum; through Aug. 29. . . . ¶ D. W. Griffith, and 23rd St. West Triplex; starting Aug. 30.)

Eraserhead (1977)—David Lynch, who was the writer, the director, and the set designer, and was also responsible for the wonderfully grubby special effects, seems to have reinvented the experimental-film movement; watching this daringly irrational movie, with its interest in dream logic, you almost feel that you're seeing a European avant-garde gothic of the twenties or early thirties. Time seems completely still while the hero, Henry (John Nance), whose hair stands on end, as if permanently shocked, in an Afro pompadour that's squared off—it suggests an eraser on the head of a pencil—moves through streets reminiscent of the ones Peter Lorre sidled through in "M." Henry appears to come out of the viewer's subconscious; he experiences a man's worst fears of courtship and marriage and fatherhood (to a whimpering monster). The slow, strange rhythm is very unsettling and takes some getting used to, but it's an altogether amazing, sensuous film. The cast includes Judith Roberts, Charlotte Stewart, Laurel Near, and Jack Fisk as the deus ex machina. (Festival; Sept. 4-5.)

Ghostbusters (1984)—A scare comedy, with Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd, and Harold Ramis as parapsychologists who try to save New York City from an influx of spooks. Murray is the film's comic mechanism: the more supernatural the situation, the more jaded his reaction. But nobody else has much in the way of material, and since there's almost no give-and-take among the three men, Murray's lines fall on dead air. Playing opposite Murray, Sigourney Weaver is a living zinger; when she stands talking to Murray, she's eye to eye with him and she looks vivid and indestructible. The cast includes Annie Potts, Rick Moranis, Ernie Hudson, William Atherton, and David Margulies. Directed by Ivan Reitman. (6/25/84) (Ziegfeld.)

Gremlins (1984)—The director Joe Dante has the sensibility of a freaked-out greeting-card poet. This whimsical pop shocker is set in a sleepy small town at Christmastime. The hero Billy (Zach Galligan), a young bank teller, is given a mogwai—a tiny creature who nests in a box and makes gentle cooing sounds; when the instructions that Billy is given for its care are inadvertently disobeyed, the mogwai multiplies, and its progeny turn into greedy, demonic little gargoyles. The movie never comes together, but Dante is a genuine eccentric talent with a flair for malice. With Frances Lee McCain, Polly Holliday, Dick Miller, Phoebe Cates, Hoyt Axton, Keye Luke, Glynn Turman, and Judge Reinhold. The critters were designed by Chris Walas. (6/25/84) (Manhattan, 86th St. East, Greenwich Playhouse, and Criterion Theatres; starting Aug. 30.)

The Honeymoon Killers (1970)—Based on the lives of the multiple murderers Martha Beck and Raymond Fernandez, who met their victims through Lonely Hearts clubs, and who were put to death at Sing Sing in 1951. This low-budget black-and-white movie goes through the chronicle of the Beck-Fernandez crimes with pedestrian relentlessness; it's paced as if the actors were walking in lockstep. As the two-hundred-pound Martha Beck, Shirley Stoler is much too shrill at the start but quiets down and improves as the movie plods on; as the sleazy charmer Ray Fernandez, Tony Lo Bianco is alarmingly authentic to the pulpy genre. Directed by Leonard Kastle. With Marilyn Chris, Barbara Cason, and Mary Jane Higby. (Festival; Sept. 4-5.)

The Human Comedy (1943)—William Saroyan wrote the script for this deliberately unsensational wartime family story set in a small town, and his love and woozy high spirits come pouring through. You can fight it, but part of the time you lose—especially when freckled five-year-old Jackie (Butch) Jenkins waves hopefully at passing trains. Mickey Rooney plays Jackie's older brother, and Van Johnson is his oldest brother, who's in the Army. Fay Bainter is the impossibly lofty mother of this brood. Saroyan and the director, Clarence Brown, were trying for something—and the film is worth seeing—but there's also a cloying M-G-M shininess to it. With Donna Reed, Barry Nelson, Marsha Hunt, James Craig, Alan Baxter, Ray Collins, and Darryl Hickman. (Thalia; Sept. 3.)

Kill! (1968)—A rousing samurai film, directed by Kihachi Okamoto in a modern style influenced by Kurosawa. In Japanese. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Sept. 5.)

Kiss of the Spider Woman—Set in a nameless South American country, Hector Babenco's film version of Manuel Puig's famous novel is about a homosexual window dresser, Molina (William Hurt), and a revolutionary, Valentín (Raul Julia), who share a prison cell. Molina tries to comfort Valentín and help him forget his pain and misery by telling him the stories of old movies. Hurt (whose performance took the first prize at Cannes this year) is just about the only thing to look at; he's very likable in the scenes where Molina reveals his tenderness and warmth and humor, and the picture can work on audiences in the way that "Midnight Cowboy" did back in 1969. (The times having changed, it can make explicit what was potential in that earlier relationship.) But it's a slack piece of moviemaking, and as sentimental as the forties screen romances that Molina is infatuated with; that is to say, it moves an audience at the obvious points. The novel is a sly celebration of the seductive, consoling power of movies; Babenco reaches for something larger, something aggressively moral. Valentín, a Marxist prig and a puritan about pleasure, learns humility and becomes more of a man through his close friendship with the sweetly maternal Molina. And Molina is transfigured through the power of love and happiness and a new self-respect. This Brazilian production, made in English, was shot in São Paulo; the screenplay is by Leonard Schrader. (8/26/85) (Cinema I.)

Knock on Any Door (1949)—John Derek as a young delinquent on trial for killing a policeman, and Humphrey Bogart as the lawyer defending him. As the lawyer talks, we see the boy's grim past in flashback; his father died in prison, he was sent to reform school, his child wife committed suicide. Making this solemn sociological case for him, Bogart is so wearing that you wish he'd stop orating and get out his own rod again. Nicholas Ray directed. (Regency; Sept. 5.)

A Man and a Woman (1966)—The young cinematographer-director Claude Lelouch conveys tender love by cutting to gambolling lovers among gambolling horses and then lambs and then dogs. The characters have exciting, photogenic occupations: stunt man, script girl, racing-car driver. They take their kids on photogenic boats or for walks on wintry beaches. The actors don't have to do anything because the camera—shooting through rain and snow and ice and into sunsets—supplies the moods for them. With Anouk Aimée, Jean-Louis Trintignant, and Pierre Barouh. In French. (Cinema Village; Sept. 2-3.)

Meetings with Remarkable Men (1979)—Reverent as can be, and the closest thing we will ever get to an official movie biography of G. I. Gurdjieff, who searched for the secret of life through a higher consciousness. (It sounds vague because it is vague.) Much mote-in-the-middle-distance acting, consulting of arcane maps, trekking across Central Asia, and discussion of "vibrations," etc. With Dragan Maksimovic as Gurdjieff, Terence Stamp, and Donald Sumpter. Directed by Peter Brook. (Festival; Sept. 6-7.)

Ninotchka (1939)—Garbo brings her incredible sensual abandon to the role of a glum, scientifically trained Bolshevik envoy who succumbs to Parisian freedom—i.e., champagne. The film includes a historic encounter, when the great instinctual artist of the screen meets the great stylist and technician of the stage—Ina Claire, as a Russian grand duchess. The fur flies exquisitely. Directed by Ernst Lubitsch, this light, satirical comedy has the nonchalance and the sophistication that were his trademark—but it also reveals that this time the trade marked him too high. There's an obviousness here; we can feel that we're being played down to. With Melvyn Douglas, Sig Rumann, Felix Bressart, Bela Lugosi, Alexander Granach, and George Tobias. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 2.)

Prizzi's Honor—This John Huston picture has a ripe and daring comic tone. It revels voluptuously in the murderous finagling of the members of a Brooklyn Mafia family, and rejoices in their scams. Jack Nicholson's average-guyness as Charley, the clan's enforcer, is the film's touchstone: this is a baroque comedy about people who behave in ordinary ways in grotesque circumstances. Everything in this picture works with everything else—which is to say that John Huston has it all in the palm of his big, bony hand. With William Hickey, Anjelica Huston, Kathleen Turner, and John Randolph. (7/1/85) (Greenwich Playhouse, Cinema 3, and Cinema Studio. . . . ¶ Embassy; through Aug. 29.)

Rambo: First Blood Part II—Audiences hoot at it and get a little charged up at the same time. The proceedings are directed by George P. Cosmatos, and he gives the near-psychotic material a veneer of professionalism, but the looniness is always there. The film's star and progenitor is Sylvester Stallone, and the way he's photographed he's huge—our national palooka. This humanoid Christ figure with brown leather skin and symmetrical scars goes into Vietnam and brings out a bunch of our missing-in-action men. With Julia Nickson, Richard Crenna, and Charles Napier. (6/17/85) (Criterion Theatres.)

Romeo and Juliet (1968)—Only about half the play is left, and what's there doesn't build up the rhythm of a poetic drama. Heard in isolated fragments, the lines just seem a funny way of talking that is hard to understand. The movie was sold on its "youth appeal" and on teen-agers playing teen-agers. But you can always make a movie with kids playing kids; the feat would be if the kids could read Shakespeare. Here, the lines are unintelligible because the actors' faces and bodies aren't in tune with the words. In Shakespeare's version, Romeo and Juliet played together at poetry and at love; they made love through poetry, matching each other's conceits. Here the actors seem dear little children playing at Franco Zeffirelli's notion of teen-age sex hunger. Then, suddenly, the movie is filled with weeping and lamentation and carrying on. All this violence and hysteria appear to come out of nowhere, because these little child lovers, with their baby talk, hardly seem to have the sensuality or the grand passion to go mad this way. With Olivia Hussey, Leonard Whiting, John McEnery, Michael York, Pat Heywood, and Milo O'Shea. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Sept. 3.)

Secret Six (1931)—When M-G-M got hold of a good thing, it was put to use; they threw Clark Gable into eleven films in 1931. This one is an elaborate melodrama with Jean Harlow, Wallace Beery, Marjorie Rambeau, Johnny Mack Brown, and Lewis Stone. George Hill directed. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 3.)

Seven Beauties (1976)—The writer-director Lina Wertmüller's slapstick-tragedy investigation of an Italian common man's soul, set during the Second World War, with flashbacks to the thirties. Pasqualino (Giancarlo Giannini) deserts the Italian Army in Germany, is captured by the Germans, and is sent to a concentration camp. In flashbacks, we see his prewar life as a two-bit mafioso, with fat sisters—the "seven beauties." Pasqualino is everybody's dupe. He believes what the Mafia tells him, what Mussolini tells him, what anybody in authority tells him. As Giannini plays him, he's a Chaplinesque Fascist. The picture is full of flashy ideas, cruelty, moist wistfulness, and pious moralizing, and Wertmüller presents it all in a goofy, ebullient mood. With Elena Fiore, Fernando Rey, Enzo Vitale, Mario Conti, and Shirley Stoler. In Italian. (Festival; Sept. 1-3.)

The Shooting Party—Working with Julian Bond's adaptation of Isabel Colegate's novel and a dream of a cast—James Mason (in his final movie), John Gielgud, Dorothy Tutin, Edward Fox, Gordon Jackson, Cheryl Campbell, Judi Bowker, Rupert Frazer, Aharon Ipalé—the director Alan Bridges carries the Masterpiece Theatre approach to the level of art. In the English countryside in the autumn of 1913, a large number of landed gentry, aristocrats, servants, gamekeepers, beaters, and loaders gather for a three-day shoot. Colegate's tone is lightly self-mocking, and the film is full of the English affection for gentle lunacy. This is one of the rare movies that can be said to be for an educated audience without that being a putdown. As the host, an aging baronet who's conscious that he's losing his grip, Mason gives the film its immediacy. (6/17/85) (Quad Cinema.)

Silverado—The director, Lawrence Kasdan, uses accomplished actors: the four heroes journeying west to Silverado in the eighteen-eighties are played by Kevin Kline, Scott Glenn, Kevin Costner, and Danny Glover, and they're variously involved with Linda Hunt, Rosanna Arquette, Brian Dennehy, John Cleese, and Jeff Goldblum. But the atmosphere is arch and uninvolving, and these actors don't seem sure what their characters are meant to be. The film is like a homage to the expensive Western; it's so opulent it has a nouveau-riche aura about it. (7/29/85) (Coronet, and 23rd St. West Triplex. . . . ¶ Embassy 1; through Aug. 29. . . . ¶ Embassy; starting Aug. 30.)

Swept Away (1974)—A Sicilian Communist deckhand (Giancarlo Giannini) working on a yacht and the rich blond shrew (Mariangela Melato) who chartered the ship for a pleasure cruise are marooned on an island. She gave him a bad time when she had the upper hand, so when he takes charge on the island and starts whacking her around maybe one can say that he isn't hitting a woman, he's hitting the capitalist class. Under the guise of a Socialist parable about the economic determinism of personal behavior (class interests determine sexual choice, etc.), the writer-director, Lina Wertmüller, has actually introduced a new version of the story of Eve, the spoiler. This erotic fantasy is like a modern version of Valentino's "The Sheik"—blissful rape for the trendy, dissatisfied liberated woman. And solid reassurance for the men in the audience that women only want to be mastered, yet are sly little beasts, never to be trusted. In Italian. (Festival; Sept. 1-3.)

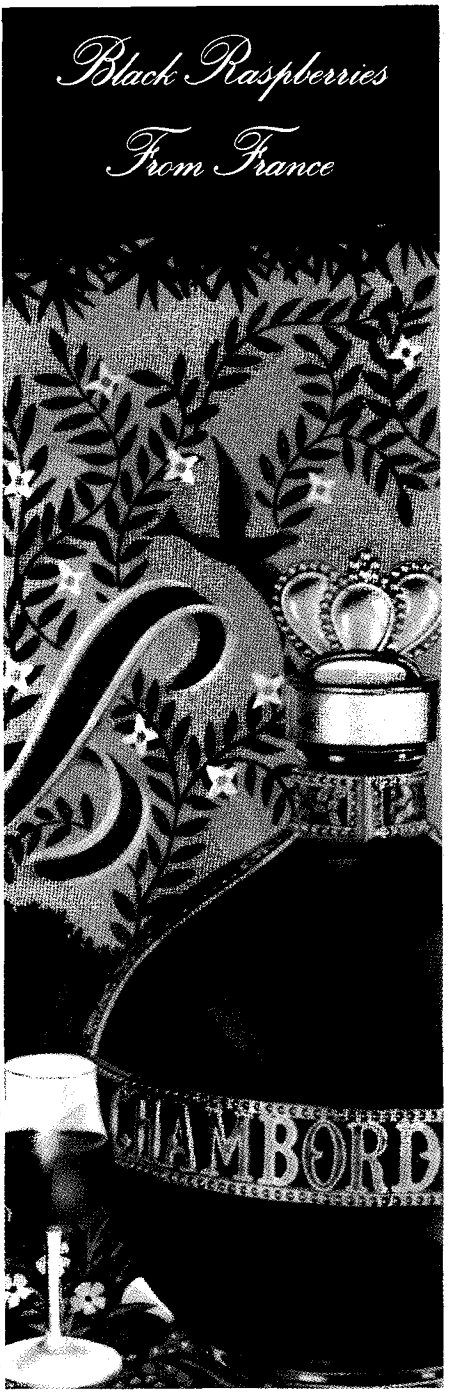
The Tall Blond Man with One Black Shoe (1973)—French burlesque, inky-shadowed and funny, about an unlistenable-to musician (Pierre Richard) with hectic hair suggesting Colette's. The hero is in the middle of a farce about a mini-rivalry between an intelligence chief and his deputy. Written by Yves Robert and Francis Vêber, directed by M. Robert. In French. (Thalia; Sept. 1-2.)

They Drive by Night (1940)—The director, Raoul Walsh, probably had little to do with the film's schizoid nature. The first half, involving George Raft, Humphrey Bogart, and Alan Hale, is an action-filled, realistic good story about freelance truck drivers who run fruit and vegetables in to the big-city markets. In the second half, Raft, neat, shaved, and respectably at work in an office, is pursued by Ida Lupino, his employer's wife, but manages to hold out, because he is engaged to Ann Sheridan. This part is standard movie melodrama and not particularly well done. With Roscoe Karns, George Tobias, Gale Page, and Joyce Compton; from a novel by A. I. Bezzerides. (Regency; Sept. 6-7.)

The Time of Your Life (1948)—The William Saroyan comedy about an assortment of derelicts in a San Francisco waterfront dive, transformed with fidelity into an amusing picture. With James and Jeanne Cagney, William Bendix, and James Barton. Directed by H. C. Potter. (Thalia; Sept. 3.)

The Uninvited (1944)—Ray Milland and Ruth Hussey are the brother and sister who buy a house on the Cornish coast only to find it inhabited by a spooky evil presence. Sexy-eyed Gail Russell never could act worth a damn, but she had an eerie lustre, and she's lovely as the mysterious young girl who helps in the exorcism. The picture was popular, though it doesn't come anywhere near fulfilling one's initial hopes that it will be a first-rate ghost movie. Lewis Allen directed. With Cornelia Otis Skinner, Donald Crisp, Alan Napier, Dorothy Stickney, and Barbara Everest. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 1.)

Zabriskie Point (1970)—Antonioni's American-made movie is about a semi-political boy (Mark Frechette) and an uncommitted girl (Daria Halprin) and how everything they encounter in American life is cruel and rotten. When the boy is (implausibly) killed by a "pig," the girl sees what must come: the destruction of America (which turns out to be a ravishingly pretty apocalypse). It's a very odd sensation to watch a message movie by a famous European artist telling us what is wrong with America while showing us something both naïve and decrepit. Antonioni can't animate the young performers—he can't, it seems, truly connect with them. He falls back on the youth mythology so popular in the mass media (the young are good guys and the older white Americans are bad guys), and this rigid, schematic point of view doesn't fit his deliberately open-ended, sprawling style. The movie seems unconsciously snobbish—as if Antonioni thought America should be destroyed because of its vulgarity. With Rod Taylor. (Hollywood Twin Cinema 2; Sept. 4-5.)



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THE
NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

A FRIEND writes:

When I didn't win the forty-one million dollars in the New York State Lottery last week, I had to change my plans a bit. I had gone as far as to just sort of tentatively write out a few checks. (I didn't sign them, of course, lest one might accidentally get into the mail prematurely—I was prudent.) But now that the results are in I'm kind of just sitting here looking at the checks. And, studying them, I think they represent a moderately sound set of decisions—nothing spectacularly wonderful but not the worst I ever made. In short, I didn't lose my head, or anything. I handled the whole thing pretty well, it seems to me, without a lawyer or a financial adviser, or even a stern, thrifty spouse.

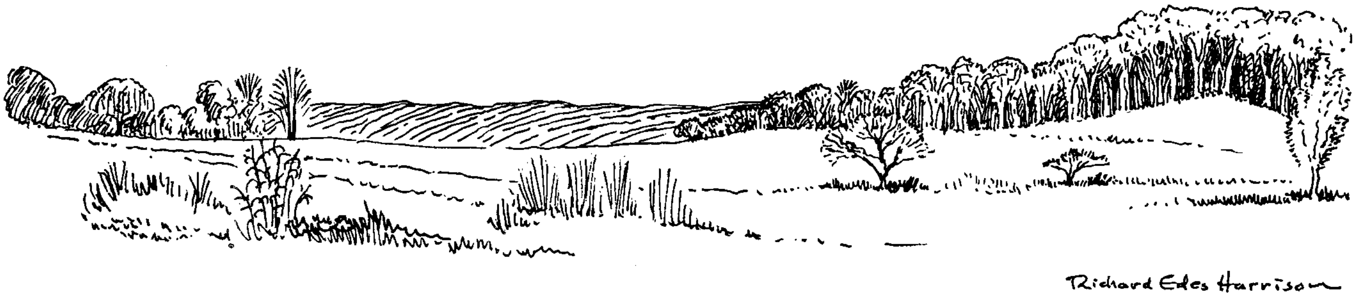
The thirty-five thousand dollars to Audio Horizons for the pair of Infinity Reference Standard speakers was the main personal item, except for the five hundred and fifty dollars to Lucchese, of San Antonio, for a new pair of boots, and the twenty-three dollars and eighty-four cents to Balducci's, in the Village, for two pounds of oyster mushrooms. If you sauté the oyster mushrooms in butter and strew them wantonly over your pasta, people think you're a superb cook, but oyster mushrooms are a shade on the dear side, so I don't buy them very often. Nobody (to my knowledge) makes better-looking cowboy boots than Mr. Lucchese, and the speakers have twelve midranges each, incomparable bass, and highs that could be bounced off the space shuttle. Self-indulgence, yes, but, proportionately, perhaps not overmuch.

All the people I saw quoted in the newspapers said that if they won they were going to build a new house for their mothers. Well, my mother already has a pretty-good house, in Decatur, Illinois, and I don't think she wants a new one. She might want a new husband, because my father has been extremely cranky lately, especially since she made him stop wearing his John Deere gimme hat in public places, but there's not much I can do about that. I thought it might be nice, though, if she could have a chat with A. J. Ayer, the British philosopher, whom she's been a fan of ever since she read "Language, Truth and Logic," published in 1936. So there's a check here made out to Sir Alfred Jules Ayer, with the amount unspecified, because I didn't know what his fee for this sort of one-on-one encounter might be. I really regret that this won't happen. Professor Ayer would probably have had a smashing time with Mother—maybe he'd even have learned a thing or two.

And all the people quoted in the newspapers were also going to send money to Africa for famine relief if they won. I've already sent twenty-five bucks; I more or less felt off the hook there. But some kind of damn philanthropy is indicated when you're a Max Winner, I figured—it would mitigate the guilt, for one thing. So I wrote twenty checks for five hundred thousand dollars each, dating them 1985, 1986, 1987, and so on, to a wheat farmer I know in Montana, together with a covering letter instructing him to send wheat, in whatever tonnage the money would buy, and carefully packaged, to Africa. I don't think the crisis will be resolved in twenty years. My friend is a young guy but very reliable. This disembarrassed me of about half my fortune, after taxes, and I felt—well, *lighter*.

Parenthetically, large numbers do not frighten the modern citizen. I've noticed that. For instance, the number of dogs worldwide is thought to be between a hundred and twenty and a hundred and fifty million. Quite a few dogs. The number of people on earth, as of the most recent figures, is something like four billion seven hundred sixty-six million three hundred and twenty-four thousand. The national debt is running right around a trillion eight hundred billion. The notion of forty-one mil didn't scare me. I mean, it was a problem, but superable.

There were some small, trivial items among my thirty-two unsigned checks: a few dollars for Bill, so that he can get a new transmission for the Chevy (his transmission junked out in July; he's the man who gave me a thirty-mile tow when my radiator



blew in Maine a couple of years ago), and a neat one thousand for the National Endowment for the Arts, earmarked for a struggling young country fiddler of promise. On Wednesday night, I watched the Lotto machine make the plastic balls bounce and bubble on television and checked the numbers as they appeared on the screen. My ticket, when I compared it with the numbers on the screen, was not what you'd call handsome—it was downright meagre. But I was sane, even serene.

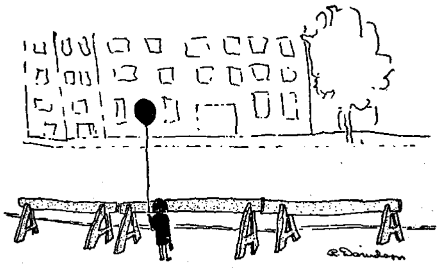
* * *

Ken

LONDON has about the same number of people as New York but more than six times as many boroughs, each with its own council; it also has an over-all city governing body, called the Greater London Council, which Mrs. Thatcher's Conservative Government is in the process of abolishing, along with six other large metropolitan councils, in the Midlands and the North of England, by an act of Parliament that became law on July 16th. The London equivalent of Ed Koch is not a mayor but the Leader of the Greater London Council, and, unlike Koch or President Reagan, and like Mrs. Thatcher, the Leader is elected by fellow-members of his or her majority group. The present, and probably last, holder of the job is Ken Livingstone, a thin-mustached forty-year-old former cancer-research lab technician and former trainee teacher, whose enthusiasms, foibles, and left-wing proclivities have been rich copy for the mostly right-wing British press in the past four years, and whose identification with a campaign to save the G.L.C. has made him one of the best-known public figures in Britain (second only to the Pope in the BBC's 1982 Man-of-the-Year poll), a scourge of Tory Ministers (and some Labour colleagues), and a folk hero to many Londoners. Livingstone is a former anarchist, a former believer in strong powers for the borough councils who in 1979 himself supported the idea of doing away with the G.L.C., and a lifelong collector of frogs, salamanders, and similar small creatures, a number of whom share his small flat in Kilburn, North London. A down-to-earth politician (who prefers the name Ken to the Kenneth he was christened), he often supports causes—like the Palestine Liberation Organization—that he knows will be unpopular with working-class voters; he declined an invitation to the wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer; he took his most recent holiday in Cuba; and, as a result of internal G.L.C. Labour-group squabbles about how best to oppose Government constraints on the G.L.C.'s budget for the coming year, he is at present not on speaking terms with several men and women who a few months ago were among his closest friends and supporters. He is a maverick radical, who can use dogma and socialist theory when it suits him and who can become unsettlingly (for his even more doctrinaire left-wing colleagues) realistic when that seems to suit him—and possibly London—better. He has what the British call cheek—an absolutely confident manner—which in his case doesn't seem to be diminished by an adenoidal South London accent and is probably made more effective by occasional moments of humorous self-depreciation.

We were in London not long ago and caught Ken Livingstone for a short period in the middle of a day in which he was not only conducting the normal duties of Leader in the way of paperwork and meetings but also visiting a black music coöperative and a self-help business center in the London borough of Brent and trying to find time to see a dentist about a troublesome tooth. We met him in his riverside office in County Hall, the G.L.C. headquarters, just across the Thames from the Houses of Parliament. In the last year or so, County Hall has been decorated with huge banners hung facing Parliament and announcing the number of Londoners who are unemployed or, more recently, the percentage of Londoners opposed to G.L.C. abolition. (A Harris Poll gave this as seventy-four per cent.) After abolition, some Conservatives hope to see County Hall turned into a hotel or new offices for the Inland Revenue, the British tax collectors.

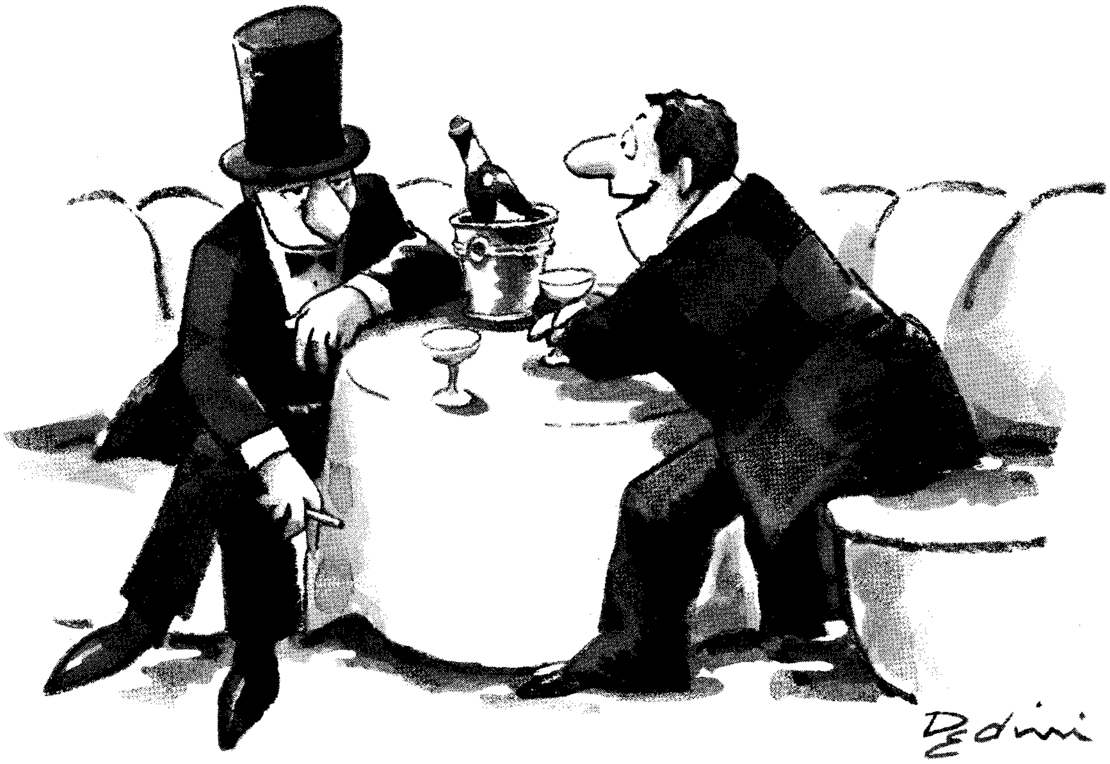
"I have to run down to Lambeth, and, if you don't mind, we'll talk in the car," said Livingstone, who was wearing a gray suit and an open-necked shirt. It was a hire car, with a driver, and as it made its way into the South London traffic we asked Livingstone for a résumé of how the Greater London Council had got into such a bind. "There has been tension for more than a century between the Government of the day and whoever was running London," he said. "Particularly when the Conservatives have been in office. London is a capital city that plays a preponderant role in the country. It is home for seven million people in a nation of fifty-four million, and it furnishes a power base that the Conservatives have always been worried about. Moreover, in the last few years the Conservatives have started to favor centralizing forces. This used to be Labour's policy—and, in part, mine, too, when I was a borough councillor and wanted more power not only for that tier but for the top authority, which is national government, at the expense of the G.L.C. But we've changed. Certainly Mrs. Thatcher's big majority seems to make the House of Commons an elective dictatorship, able to do what it likes for five years as long as it doesn't provoke a military coup. We have no written constitution in this country to protect us. President Reagan couldn't abolish the New York City Council, could he? Another factor is that until recently the Labour Party has provided only mediocre opposition to the Government. Mrs. Thatcher has perceived the threat to her as coming from industrial action and from local government—from cities, where the pressures of unemployment and monetarist policies are most acutely felt. Her Government thinks it can save money and get rid of persistent critics by axing the metropolitan councils. She says that because a pledge to do this formed a few lines in the last Conservative election manifesto she has overwhelming public support. Every other big city in the Western world has its own elected government. People in New York and Paris must think we've taken leave of our senses."



We asked if in his view the advocates of G.L.C. abolition had any justification at all.

"A little," he said. "I'd agree that in the postwar period until 1979 the G.L.C. had a consistent record of failure in meeting challenges of public housing, public transport, and strategic planning. A slightly revamped, streamlined G.L.C. might well make sense. In any event, I'd say that right now only ten per cent of what the

G.L.C. does is controversial—particularly the grants we give to minority organizations—and ninety per cent is to do with the day-to-day administration of London, which has to be done by somebody, and which we think should be subject to the public vote. We dispose of the garbage, we run the Fire Brigade, and we have a subsidiary body that provides education for all of Inner London. We've managed to get more Londoners using public transport and fewer using private cars than in many years past. The Government plans to hand over about a third of what we do to the thirty-two boroughs and two-thirds to boards and appointed committees—quangos, as they are sinisterly called—which will be only remotely accountable to people who live in London. The Secretary of State for the Environment is to be given draconian powers—and I would have thought even Conservatives would see that as a bad precedent. In a few years' time, what will a Labour Minister do with the same powers?"



"Maybe an M.B.A. is a smart career move. After all, you've been a good-time Charlie for over eight years now."

We asked Livingstone how he had got into politics.

"I'm a South Londoner. I was born in Streatham, part of the borough of Lambeth, not far from here, and I grew up a bit farther south, in Norwood. I went to a comprehensive school where for a year we had a great teacher who made us read newspapers and got us to debate the issues of the day, like Suez and Hungary. My father was working class but Conservative, and every night we used to argue at the dinner table. After I left school, at seventeen, I hitchhiked down through Africa to Nigeria—it was the time of the Biafran War. I met American Peace Corps workers and admired what they were doing. By the time I was twenty-three, I had got involved in trade-union activities, organizing a union branch at the lab where I worked. I decided to join the Labour Party—it was just about at its nadir in terms of active membership—and I've been trying ever since to change it from within. I was married for a while to a woman who was a teacher and was also involved in Labour politics but went on teaching and allowed me to be active full time in local-council work. Since we split up, I've been living entirely on my expenses and allowances as a councillor. As G.L.C. Leader, I get roughly six thousand pounds a year, which is less than the average industrial wage. For the past fifteen years, I've been seeking election as a Labour Parliamentary candidate. To date, I've been spectacularly unsuccessful."

We said we understood that the Brent East Labour candidacy now looked like being his. Was there any danger that Londoners might think he was planning to leave the bridge of the ship before it was sunk?

"Three answers to that," Livingstone said. "One, I've never disguised my hope of getting into Parliament. Two, I hope to be Leader of the G.L.C. until at least March 31st next year, when it is to be abolished. Three, the ship hasn't actually gone down yet, and it is clear to me that most Londoners want London to have its own elected government. Mrs. Thatcher was forced to amend her legislation and extend the life of the G.L.C. for a year. Even some Tories regard the abolition as undemocratic. Ted Heath, the former Prime Minister, has said that it lays Conservatives open to the charge of the greatest piece of gerrymandering in the last hundred and fifty years. Mrs. T. claims that abolition will save the nation fifty million pounds a year, but recent Government white papers do not confirm this. The Government still hasn't worked out who will dispose of the garbage or look after great parks like Hampstead Heath, or how it will manage continuing legal and financial business. I think the cost of servicing public housing, road maintenance, planning, and long-term debt will overwhelm the predicted savings—and a Tory Bow Group pamphlet thinks so, too."

And if all fails?

"I won't be idle. I intend to write a book about the G.L.C. and to campaign for Parliament. The abolition will be unpopular in London; people will not forget it, and the issue will lead to the defeat of a number of Conservative M.P.s in London constituencies. If I am elected as part of a Labour majority, I will help carry out Labour's pledge to put a Greater London Council back to work."

Our car halted, and Ken Livingstone, saying goodbye, got out and hastened to the door of the Lambeth offices of the Transport and General Workers Union.

We asked the driver how the

G.L.C.'s abolition would affect him.

He said gloomily, "My firm's going to lose a lot of business."

Sniff

SCENTRON is one thing—a big thing, the first real innovation in automobile-cigarette-lighter technology in a generation. But, as we found out when we stopped by Donald Spector's office last month, it's not the only thing. A shelf in the office kitchen holds his other inventions. The animated radio has plastic busts of cartoon characters on top which light up as the music plays. The Bruce Jenner Exerciser is "essentially a shock absorber with handles." It sits near the Fireball, a plastic ball that glows orange in the night, and Seal 'N' Grow, an inflatable terrarium that cuts germination time in half. Pop-Art, an edible goo, allows youth to sculpture popcorn. Mr. Spector can't describe another product (there are legal reasons) except to say that it is the equivalent of a large glass of orange juice. "I've been quite successful," Mr. Spector said. "I've reached the point where I don't have to work unless I want to."

But Mr. Spector doesn't have to slow down to smell the roses. Roses mix with other garden scents to create Floral Bouquet, one of four Scentron scents. Scentron, a car cigarette lighter that accepts an inexpensive disposable cartridge containing a waxy block of fragrance, emits a blast of smell each time the lighter is depressed. Within seconds, Citrus, or maybe Leather, permeates the sedan. "The automotive industry is very interested in Leather," Mr. Spector said. "It's a very romantic concept, but, frankly, it's not a fragrance people live with all that well. Roses are better."

"We looked at vanilla. We really wanted to put it in, but it was a little sophisticated," added Barbara Carver, who works with Mr. Spector.

"We tried so hard for a new-car fragrance," Mr. Spector said. He showed us several small vials labelled "New Car." "But it was very hard to get it right. Your new-car smell is mostly glue and vinyl."

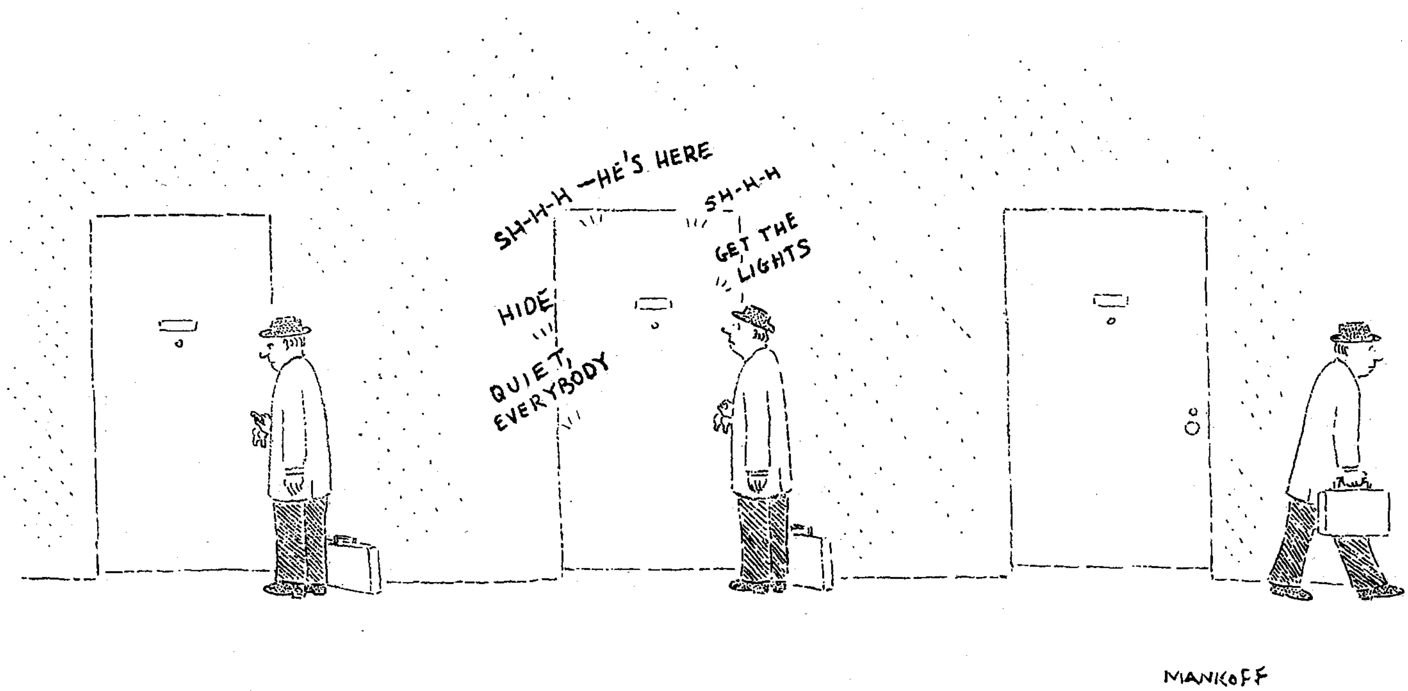
Every Lincoln-Mercury sold in the tri-state area this fall will come equipped with a Scentron, and in October young women in tuxedos will wander through Bloomingdale's with cigarette trays, except that instead of cigarettes they will be selling Scentrons. "The week of the Orange Bowl game, we want to go to Miami and make every rental car smell like an orange," Mr. Spector said.

A Little Learning

APES eat between meals. What, then, separates them from men? This, certainly: less advanced primates show scant concern for self-improvement. When representatives of, say, the Learning Annex (New York's largest adult-education school) approach them on the street with catalogues, apes simply shuffle by. But people are human, and want, more badly than they can say, to be better. On several recent evenings, we dropped by the upper-East Side junior high school where the Annex meets, and sampled some courses.

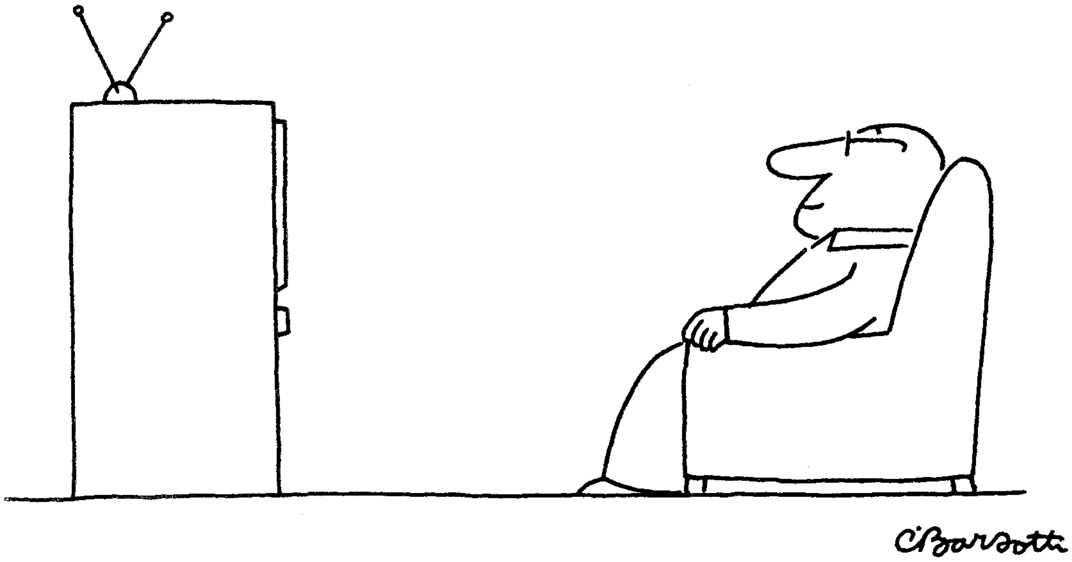
Howard Ross, a consultant in the data-processing industry, advises Annex students on how they can enter the consulting field. "I'm honest with them," he told us. "People think consulting is glamorous and prestigious. What I try to impart is that it's not." The night we attended his class, the student body included four data-processors; some specialists in security, mental health, dietetics, and cookware; and a pair of special-events coördinators. "Say there's a town in New Jersey that wanted to get in the 'Guinness Book of World Records' with the biggest game of— What's that game where they take away a chair? Musical chairs. They'd hire a special-events coordinator," Mr. Ross explained. Almost anyone who knows about almost anything can be a consultant, he said. "Companies may need consultants to prepare women moving to the Middle East with their husbands for the fact that they will be second-class citi-

NARROW ESCAPE



zens," he went on. He showed us a brochure from a "holistic beauty-care image consultant," and said, "She will consult your whole physical outlook, and then she recommends ointments and creams and oils."

Mr. Ross talked at some length about choosing a name for your consulting firm. "My partner and I played with hundreds of names for our consultancy," he said. "We thought of Computropic—like heliotropic, except tending toward computers. We thought of Nova Systems. Finally, we settled on SR Data Services, because my partner's last name is Segal and mine is Ross. Your name is very important. A woman I know has a one-person consulting company and calls it the Energy Design Group, Inc. It sounds huge." Business cards are also important. "Be a little different," Mr. Ross advises. "I'm not talking about using purple ink on cerise paper. I'm talking off-white, maybe beige."



"In today's headlines: Koch was outrageous, Moynihan was witty, Cuomo was wise, and Dwight Gooden pitched a no-hitter."

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FIFTEEN people showed up for Patrice Lordier's class in how to Put the Show in Your Trade Show, but one of them actually wanted to be down the hall in Make Friends at the Opera, so he left. Miss Lordier, who has helped stage dozens of trade shows and industrial displays, told us she was almost the only person in the Yellow Pages with the words "novelty acts" in her ad. "I get a lot of calls. One time, a glove company got in touch with me. They were using the slogan 'This Man's Hands Are Worth a Million Dollars,' and they wanted a trapeze artist. I used my connections and found this fellow Fay Alexander, who had been only the sixth man ever to execute a triple somersault. Since then, someone has done a quad, but at one time he was the best. He was Burt Lancaster, Tony Curtis, *and* Gina Lollobrigida in the movie 'Trapeze.' He'd since retired from flying—he was doing a clown-car act at Great Adventure, the amusement park in New Jersey. But he was perfect. He showed up at seven in the morning, even though he wasn't needed until nine. Your novelty acts are notoriously reliable." There was also Georges Ghezzi, who did the Pierre du Pont and His Dog Sparky act, but you probably know all about that.

Trade-show producers are less apt, these days, to employ scantily clad blondes ("There are too many women in managerial positions who might be offended," Miss Lordier explained), and more apt to compose their small dramas meticulously so as to highlight the customer's product. "Once, I was doing a show that was supposed to promote Silicon Surfactant L-562, a chemical from Union Carbide used in the manufacture of foam rubber," said Miss Lordier. "It had nine selling points, one of which was that it was noted for its 'flat-top' process. The foam rubber came out nice and smooth—not lumpy. So we did a magic show. One of the standard tricks is the dove pan, where the magician makes a dove come out of a cake pan. But instead of the dove we had foam rubber come out—really smooth foam rubber." Miss Lordier showed us a number of articles she has written for *Successful Meetings* and other magazines. They are dense with practical advice. When you're using animal acts, she reminds us, don't forget to "make sure freight elevators will support the weight of horses, llamas, etc."

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WE caught up with Lynne Evan Hoinash during the Annex-wide orange-juice break. She was chatting with the hypnotism teacher. "So we'll see you at that bar on Third right after class, O.K.?" he was saying. We were impressed. Miss Hoinash teaches Fifty Romantic and Unusual Things to Do in New York, a course that concentrates on what to do if you happen to go out on a date. "People have the impression that only things dark and expensive are romantic," Miss Hoinash said. She was very nice, and she was sitting maybe just a little close. Probably it was only our imagination. "Anything, even laundry, can be romantic," said Miss Hoinash, who also runs the Flirt Alert car dating service. You pay thirty dollars for a Flirt Alert bumper sticker, and then you drive around looking for other people with the same sticker. If you want to meet them, you copy down their license-plate number and send a letter to Miss Hoinash, who forwards it for you. "You can tell a lot about a person by the color of his or her car," she said. "Maroon means conservative, private, self-confident, modest."

Miss Hoinash, who burned some incense in the front of the classroom to set the mood, outlined for her students the correct way to "choreograph" a date. "It's important to pick a theme," she said. "The theme can be an area ('Let's explore SoHo') or it can be an object ('Let's go try to find antique brass buttons'). You could focus on eighteenth-century French art, or you could spend a day looking exclusively for things that are purple." Renting a limousine is very romantic, she said. "It's also wonderful to have a date start at, like, four-thirty in the morning."

HORSE DREAMS

THAT summer, I began to dream about the horses. My friend had two of them, a Morgan and a quarter horse, and to me they were giant, prehistoric in proportion. I fed them the wet grass that clogged the mower when I mowed the lawn, and their lips on my palm were large and dry. Really, it's no wonder I began to dream about them. When they thudded across the field, manes flying, it was definitely mythic. In the stalls they would angle their heads to gaze at me with one eye. Their noses were as long as my arm, their nostrils as big as my mouth. For a week after the Morgan mare was taken away to train, the gelding gave long, melodic neighs, as if sighing or calling her name in the language of horses. He stood alone in the shadow of the barn and looked at me distantly when I held out the grass clippings.

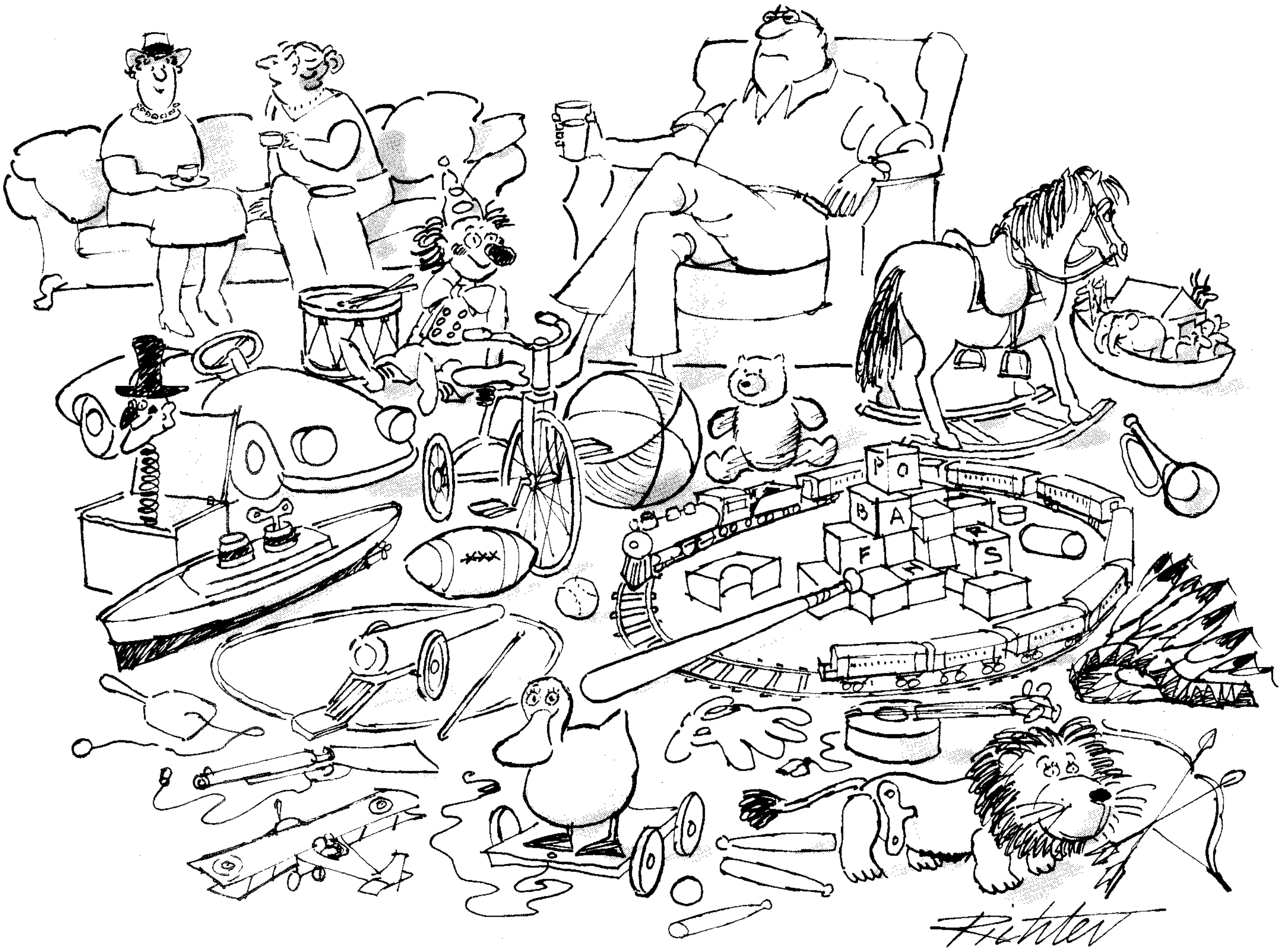
I moved onto my friend's farm near the end of May, and the first dream came on one of those cool June nights that start out clear but end with rain just before dawn. When I woke up, my window was filled with white. A fog had settled in the valley. I fell asleep again, had the dream, and when I woke up the fog had receded to the windbreak, making the trees look distant. I lay there and recalled a watercolor lesson given by a local artist; we had one of his paintings in the living room downstairs. Another summer, fifteen years before, my friend and I had been adolescents taking his class together. He taught us tricks: how to use frisket to mask the white and make a real-looking birch tree, how to tilt the wet paper so that the sky was deeper in color at the top, how to make mountains recede into the distance. That was easy: the more vivid the color, the closer the mountains would seem; paler meant farther away. The moisture and density of the air provided a scientific explanation for this, but the trick was psychological as well, since what we see more clearly we assume to be closer. What he taught us was true to life but somehow not true to art, and I never painted in watercolors again. When the painter died, his little watercolors of an imaginary lake quadrupled in value.

Living on the farm, in the summer of my dreams, I found myself losing interest in music, which had always been important to me in the past. Perhaps this was because music seemed true to art but not true to life. Like a layer of paint on a tree, music was a layer of sound over the sounds of the wind, the animals, the trees. Through the window of my bedroom I could watch the wind as well as hear it, higher currents pushing clouds across the sky or toward us, low winds making the trees rustle even when they seemed motionless. The wind made certain openings in the house and barns behave like whistles emitting a variety of low tones. And since the garden was below my window—bright-green rows between mounds of hay and dark unplanted soil—at times I had to lower the shade to avoid being distracted. Often I gave in to it all; on sunny days, I worked on the lawn or in the flower gardens, and I was always the one who watched for the mail and went outdoors to get it, whatever the weather. I would make two piles of letters on the kitchen table, then take mine upstairs to read on my bed. Despite the lure of the outdoors, I became very attached to that room, with the dark paper on the walls and the four posts of the bed, which seemed to lean in over me, and the window framing my view of the land and the weather.

The dreams of the horses did not disturb me. Ironically, it was mostly the gelding I dreamed of—the gelding in my dreams. The dreams were sexual, of course: it didn't take long to decipher their meaning. But none of that was necessary or pertinent. Before coming to the farm, I had dreamed of a neighbor's dog, with its red fur, and, before that, of a scene I had caught on television, of one man making another lick his boot. Sometimes I had another variety of dream, in which I held on to the rope of a tetherball post and swung around and around, touching down as if at the corners of an invisible square. In that dream, it was Easter and the lawn was littered with both dyed eggs and candy eggs wrapped in metallic paper. I picked up one of the candy eggs—it was larger than I'd thought, as large as a goose egg—and unwrapped it to discover that the egg itself was not chocolate but gel, transparent and filled with some clear liquid. When I thought about this dream, what struck me was that both the metallic paper and the shells of the dyed eggs were *colorful*, which settled the old question of whether or not one dreamed only in black-and-white.

Sometimes I would dream of more ordinary things: leaving telephone messages, speaking aloud, eating a midnight snack. When I woke up, I was never sure if these things had happened or not, but it didn't seem to make any difference. Once I dreamed that I had decided to go to law school, which was an impractical option even at that age, but the dream was so convincing that after I woke up I strode around feeling happily decisive for half the morning, before I realized that the source of my happiness was only a dream. This is a story I like to tell people even today, because it points out that one side of me would like to be more successful, more socially productive. I always end by noting that I could have gone to law school if I had wanted to, but the truth is that I never had any real desire to be a lawyer or to suffer through three more years of classes and examinations.

THOUGH my friend wanted me on the farm more for company than help, we tried to divide the labor equally, so the upkeep of the yard fell to me. Soon, images having to do with my mowing the lawn became as important to my dreams as the horses were. I had never had a lawn to take care of before, and had always said that it seemed to me that the mowing of a lawn was another oddment of civilization, like wearing neckties or stockings, or shaving legs and underarms. If one does not want grass two feet high in one's yard, why not install a lower-growing variety of plant? In some parts of the country, lawns are covered with stones or shells, or seeded with some sort of vine—something indestructible, like kudzu—and this is considered as attractive as a mown lawn of grass. (I admit, I have seen people in Florida out raking their stones, but somehow that seems less hopeless: stones don't grow, and they more or less stay put; you only have to rake them once a month—perhaps less.) But when I became involved with our lawn, lawns grew to be something of an obsession with me. At first, I would jokingly point out the flaws in other people's yards; then I actually developed an interest in the finer points of trimming and weed prevention. Our lawn was very large and complex, with a good many shrubs. There were plots of perennial flowers in sundry places, a half-dozen old maple trees, a low-hanging crab apple, and a blue spruce that was difficult to get under. Mowing and trimming



"*Robert came into a large inheritance as a child.*"

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combined took four hours, more or less, depending on my mood and the weather, and while I was doing it I was aware of almost nothing else but the grass I walked over, the variations in the sound of the engine (I could tell when it was about to run out of gas), the blades of the clippers and the stems of plants between them. When I came back to myself, I would suddenly realize that I was hungry, or thirsty, or that my hand was blistered again, or that the sun had burned my back or nose, or that it was nearly dark outside. Finished, I would drag a chair out into the center of the back yard or sit on the swing on the front porch, drink a cold beer, and look at my handiwork. When people visited, I drew their attention to the yard, and saw that trimming in particular was a thankless task, since nobody noticed you'd done it, while everyone did if you hadn't. Still, I felt satisfied. It was the only time in my life that I regularly went to bed with dirt under my fingernails.

In my dreams, though, the mowing and trimming were secondary. Lawns themselves became the focus—vast lawns cut short, smooth over rolling hills, almost velvetlike in texture and shine. In the tetherball dream, the eggs rested on nicely cropped grass, and though I never really saw it I remember thinking, in that dream, that the grass around the tetherball post was neatly trimmed. In the dreams with the horses, I always saw the grass just on the edge of the paddock. It was eaten short and never needed to be mowed. In my dreams, it looked more like moss than grass, and in reality as well, though I never saw the horses with their noses that low, stuck under the fence to eat the grass. In the horse dreams seeing this grass was almost the only preamble. Usually, my dream made me feel as if I had been reduced to a pair of eyes, floating low over the ground. I recognized the surfaces, and felt myself getting closer to the paddock, then slipping through the boards of the fence. One of the boards had fallen sideways and made a triangle with the other, and I always went through this hole. Then the hoof-pocked mud of the paddock itself, and the breath of the horse. It was the gelding, but he was not a gelding.

These dreams went on for some years, until long after I was married and had children, long after that summer on the farm, that summer of weather and sound. The last time I dreamed of the gelding, we were living in Los Angeles, in a large apartment building. Although it was two blocks away, the freeway, with its hundreds of speeding cars, was more than audible over the air-conditioner. I remarked once at dinner that the sound reminded me of mowing the lawn, and one of our guests, pausing between sips of coffee, asked me when I had ever mowed a lawn. In what life? And I myself found it hard to believe—hard to know what was memory, and what dream.

—ELIZABETH INNESS-BROWN

ENGAGEMENTS

IT was easy to find an apartment in New Haven, even though my classes in feminist criticism were starting in just a few days and most of the other grad students had arrived at Yale the week before. I rented a two-room flat, sunny but dingy, across the street from a punk-rock bar and overlooking the edge of the ghetto. The manager of the building—I nicknamed him Père Goriot—sold me two twin beds for ten dollars each and threw in a battered fan. It was late August, and the city felt airless. At the Salvation Army, I discovered a shabby Victorian sofa in worn blue velvet for sixty dollars. A major investment, but I bought it anyway.

At a mixer at the Art and Architecture School, I met Ray Connors. He had small, worried eyes and baby-fine hair, already receding. His back was hurting him; two years ago, at a New Year's Eve party, he had fallen down an elevator shaft. He was finishing his studies at the Architecture School in January. He went off to get me a glass of wine; by the time he came back I had practically forgotten his existence.

A few days later, Ray showed up at my apartment. I offered him some Minute Maid lemonade, but he preferred Perrier, which I didn't have. "Listen, Cora, I was wondering," he said. "I'm going home this weekend, and I wondered if you'd want to come into the city on Friday or Saturday night—you could meet my parents and see our apartment, and we could have dinner."

I don't know exactly why I agreed; it was difficult to think up a fast excuse, and I really had nothing else to do. I neither liked Ray nor disliked him—he just wasn't there.

He met me at Grand Central Terminal on Friday afternoon. I was wearing a black-and-white flowered dress with rhinestone buttons from the Salvation Army and an old forties straw hat the woman who lived next door had given me, white lace gloves and socks, and ankle-strap sandals. I caught sight of myself as we entered Ray's parents' apartment: there were floor-to-ceiling mirrors opposite the front door. Though I wasn't wearing makeup, my face was shiny. To my surprise, my outfit, which I had thought quite razzle-dazzle in New Haven, now resembled something worn by a person just off the train from Mississippi. In the mirror, with my moony, freckled face I looked as gullible as a horse. This was not at all the image I had hoped to project.

The apartment was huge, with wall-to-wall carpeting, steel-colored, and a great view of the city. Eight or ten people were sitting on pigskin sofas around the living room; they wore frosty, pale cottons and linens and gave off a certain New York type of elegance, as if they were in a photo session for a Bloomingdale's catalogue. The room was stuffy with perfume and conditioned air. I shook hands with the various middle-aged men and women. Though the room was crowded, I felt like shouting out, "Hello! Is anybody home?" These people seemed so smooth, correct, as if they were leading their lives according to standards set by *Better Homes and Gardens.*

Ray's mother insisted I go with her into the bedroom. She was frisky and plump, with hair the shade of cedar chips, and told me right away that she ran an independent film company—ran the New York office for her brother, anyway—and Ray's father designed mattresses, one of which was now in the Museum of Modern Art. In her bedroom, clothing was piled several feet deep on the floor. That morning, she told me, she had had a woman come over and go through her wardrobe to show her how to wear her stuff: which skirts she should throw out, which old sweaters went with newer things, what she should buy. The woman charged a hundred and fifty dollars for two hours, but her assistance was worth it. I thought for a minute that Mrs. Connors was going to offer to give me her old dresses—which I would happily have accepted—but all she wanted was to show me some slacks she still thought were nice but the woman insisted she get rid of.

It made me nervous to think I wasn't envious of this sort of life style. What could be wrong with me? Had I no cravings for a milky-white fur coat, an ice-cream maker to spin gelato from invisible threads—or whatever it was those machines did—a baby with sticky palms to cling to me like a marsupial? Aside from somebody's old clothes, I couldn't think of anything to want; I even lacked the desire to go on a macrobiotic diet and have my cards read by an Indian master. Once, I had read about a person who had had a lobotomy. I could empathize with this, at least when I was in the presence of others.

We went into the terra-cotta-tiled kitchen, whose ceiling was crowded with hanging stainless-steel pots and pans. Ray's father came in and kissed my hand. Mr. Connors had iron-gray hair and was really good-looking; he was taller than Ray, and very sexy. I imagined him as my father-in-law, chasing me around the sofa late at night. He made me a Tom Collins and told me how he could converse with Max, their cat—a Maine coon cat weighing at least twenty-five pounds. I thought he might mention something about Ray, but Mr. Connors seemed almost to have forgotten him. I liked Ray's parents much better than Ray. Despite their ostentation, they seemed younger than Ray, and livelier.

When Ray came into the kitchen, his father gave him a slap on the back.

"Jesus, Dad," Ray said. "My back! I'm already in agony, and you're trying to kill me."

Ray's parents wanted us to stay and have dinner with them after the guests left, but Ray said he was taking me out to a Japanese restaurant nearby. I had never had Japanese food before, so Ray decided to order portions of everything: chunks of raw tuna, abalone, mackerel, some stuffed into rice wrapped in seaweed, more lying pink on little wooden tablets with legs. Pieces of fish flopped from my chopsticks. To cover up, I gulped the plum wine. I felt as if I were being forced into re-creating a bout of seasickness I once experienced on a boat trip. "You didn't try the California-maki," Ray said. He dabbed a piece of sashimi into a dish of green mustard and wiggled it in front of my nose. I realized my palms were sweating. I wondered how much all this was going to cost. My mother and I had been broke our whole lives; I had a loan from Yale that barely covered my expenses. Ray would probably expect some form of compensation for this meal—this much I knew from past dinners with men. I tried to put it out of my mind.

We had nothing to talk about, though Ray told me more about Max, the cat, and his younger brother. Then he fell silent and stared down at his hands. I thought of a few topics: my courses at Yale, my feminist professor. Ray didn't seem very interested. I mentioned my father, whom I hadn't seen in twenty years. My parents were divorced when I was four. My father, whom my mother called Captain Ahab, remarried and moved to New Zealand in order to avoid nuclear fallout. There was a thirty-three-per-cent chance that New Zealand wouldn't be affected. But Ray apparently wasn't listening; his eyes wandered to his reflection in the mirror behind me, and he reached across the table and jabbed my elbow with a chopstick.

CAUTION
MIMES
AHEAD
LORENZ

I pretended this hadn't happened, and Ray asked for the check. Before he paid with his charge card, I got a look at how much the dinner had cost: two weeks' worth of groceries. The food was barely touched. I wasn't used to eating so well. At night, alone in my apartment, I usually ate a takeout sandwich from a vegetarian place up the block, of lima beans with melted mozzarella cheese. By eleven-thirty I had said good night to Ray and was back on the train to New Haven, a takeout paper bag in my hand.

A FEW nights later, Ray called to ask if he could drop by. I was surprised to hear from him; though I hadn't felt any elementary particles hopping between us, I decided to go to bed with him. The prospect seemed somewhat boring, but I thought I might as well get it over with. Perhaps I'd be fonder of him if something physical happened between us.

When Ray showed up, he had a carload of furniture from his apartment to give me: two teak chests, with many tiny drawers and compartments, three chairs, an expensive floor lamp, very modern. "When will you need this back?" I said. I assumed he was just lending it to me, or storing it with me for the moment.

"No, it's for you," Ray said.

"For keeps?" I said.

"Yeah, yeah," Ray said. "My father has a whole warehouse of furniture." He looked pleased.

After carrying the furniture upstairs, we went out to an espresso place a block away. Cappuccino was two dollars, so I had never gone there. I had one of the coffees with whipped cream, and a big piece of carrot cake. I ate the cake eagerly, cramming it into my mouth as if it were a drug, somehow feeling this would give me strength for whatever was to happen with Ray. "I like to watch you eat," Ray said, looking at me dreamy-eyed. I wiped off my chin with a napkin; the cake had abruptly become quite tasteless.

Ray stopped at his car to get a bottle of wine out of the trunk. He put his arm around my shoulders as we walked back to my apartment. It was after midnight. I sat on one of the twin beds; it had no frame, just a mattress and a box spring on the floor. Ray sat on a chair, uncorking the wine. I figured either he'd make a move and I'd go to bed with him or he had better go home. I was tired. Once again, I felt we had nothing to say to each other, but Ray told me the plot of a movie he had just seen. This is a symptom. I've noticed how any time a man tells me the plot of a movie it is a kind of declaration of love.

After about fifteen minutes, just as I was ready to suggest he leave, Ray went over to the closet. He took off his shoes and socks and put on my favorite pair of high heels, red leather pumps. "How do I look?" he said.

A wave of rage rose within me. He walked all around the apartment in my shoes. I didn't dare say, "Listen, Ray, you're going to stretch out my favorite shoes," because he had just given me all that furniture, and I didn't want to embarrass him. My mother always said, "Lend people your clothes, but don't wear other people's shoes or lend yours, because your shoes conform to your feet and other people's feet are different shapes and will stretch them out." Ray didn't have very large feet, but I just didn't see how he could fit them into my shoes, which were definitely small. I didn't have the money to replace them, anyway.

Then Ray put on my straw hat. Maybe he was trying to be playful. But it was almost one in the morning, and he was walking around in my straw hat and shoes. I couldn't laugh. I finally said, "Well, I'm tired and I have class in the morning."

At the door Ray kissed me good night and looked at me pleadingly. It was too late. I felt a rush of incipient hypertension, but I tried to calm myself. When Ray had finally gone, I examined the shoes. They weren't ruined after all, but I pushed them to the back of the closet.

I WAS the youngest in my family, but now I'm an only child. When I was eight, Ellen, my sister, then twelve, died of leukemia. When Ellen got sick, she asked for a dog, and got a Chihuahua named Midnight. It lived until four years ago. Now it's just my mother and I. I rarely think about Ellen. My mother doesn't like to talk about her, and for me she's become bleached to an image on a flickering movie screen. Photographs show me standing next to my sister: she had wispy blond hair, horn-rimmed glasses, and a pointy chin. Once, during a squabble, I ran into the kitchen and came back at Ellen with a handful of pepper, which I threw in her face. Just after that, she got leukemia. I also have three half brothers, whom I've never met. After Ellen's death, my father offered to pay for a ticket to New Zealand for me, but I didn't want to go—or perhaps my mother didn't want me to—and the offer was never repeated. The boys are now fifteen, thirteen, and six. In September, my father sent me a miniature jade baseball bat, highly polished, and a note congratulating me on my acceptance into the Women's Studies Program at Yale. With the jade bat was a card saying this was a replica of a Maori war club. I brooded about what my father had meant by it, but I was too busy with my courses and schoolwork to think about it for long.

At the beginning of the semester my courses seemed quite interesting, but a few days after Ray tried on my shoes I was sitting in class, taking notes as usual, when it became apparent that not one word that was being said made the slightest bit of sense. The teacher, Anna Castleton, a well-padded, grayish woman with clipped-poodle hair, was discussing a conference she had attended the week before—a Poetics of Gender colloquium—where she was severely attacked for her presentation. I carefully wrote down everything Castleton said, but when I got home that night, I reread the notes and found they still sounded as if they had been written in a foreign language.

> Status of empirical discourse.
>
> Post-structuralist account of dissolving subject precludes formation of female identity.
>
> The notion of the subject in progress.
>
> It was assumed she was calling for a return to fixed identity.
>
> Post-gendered subjectivities.
>
> If gender is constructed, a gendered identity ninety-nine per cent of the time is built onto a person who has a sex.

Here I had made a little sketch in the margin: a picture of a beaver, paddling frantically, with a tree stump clutched in its large buckteeth.

> The only text of rupture is Right Wing.
>
> To speak of identity is to speak of racism.
>
> Anyone who throws out the word "essentialist" believes that there is such a thing as real women who are transhistorical.
>
> ANYONE WHO THROWS THIS OUT AS AN OPENING REMARK IS PROVING THEIR MIDDLE-CLASS PARANOIA.
>
> The most important thing about Marxism is positing a historical subject. Now, you can say as a Marxist you want to dissolve "woman."
>
> Without using the word "class," she argued for a more complicated view of women as historical subject.
>
> Yet she was attacked for this—brutally attacked.

Then I had written down a remark of one of the other students: "Angela Davis said that Elizabeth Cady Stanton's decision to separate a middle-class reformist movement in the name of feminism was implicitly

THE COUNTRY BEYOND THE HILL

Without warning you come to the unremarkable
Rise in the land that hides it—the place
You have never visited, familiar as home.
The Country Beyond the Hill—it spells
Itself to you in these capitals.
You turn a panicky back on it.

You have seen what cannot be seen
From here: how while you do not visit there
A two-lane road is winding
Down to the village square.
The Presbyterian clock is striking.
While you stay away the dentist
Over the bank is drilling
Someone's tooth forever for an instant
And for years a hurrying
Adulterer enters the breathless partner.
A cloud is stuck in a corner
Of the air and, like everyone
Else, everyone supposes
This is the present only for a moment.

This is years from now
While you do not visit it.
At last you will come
To it from another quarter. Every road
Will lead you there.
Without warning, it will surround you—
The only place to make you welcome.
You will lift your eyes
To the hill beyond this country.
Now the clock begins to finish striking.
Now it is years from now at last.
This is where you are going to live forever.

—JOHN N. MORRIS

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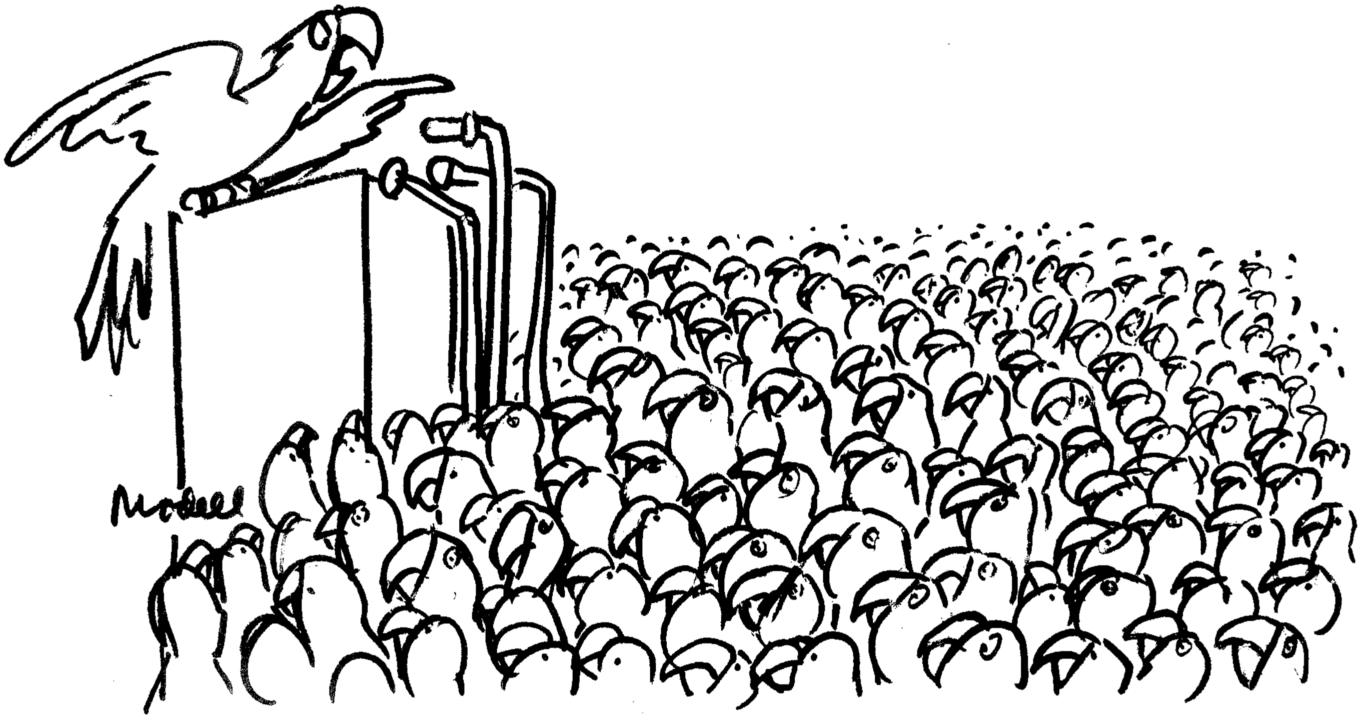


“Not only do I want a cracker—we all want a cracker!”

• •

racist—there is such a thing as non-essentialism.”

To this the teacher responded, at least according to my notes:

> It isn’t complicated, it’s simple: the unreworked biological category, where you locate yourself to take action. The language becomes the primary basis for working things out—in other words, can you top this? The privileging of the complicated.

I wondered whether the teacher had burst into tears following the attack on her. The two hours of class were devoted to a retelling of the attack, couched in this language which so gracefully circled a subject without ever landing to make a point.

At the end of the semester, I gave an oral report for the Castleton class, in which I discussed mysticism and Eastern philosophy and some of the similar themes that emerge in the writings of Virginia Woolf. I had hoped to please the teacher; throughout my report she wrote furiously in a notebook. When I finished, she looked up and said, “You’re wrong.” The other women in the class all turned to catch my reaction. I felt as if I had been electrocuted on a television game show. Castleton went on to say that I had fallen prey to a traditional male put-down: placing women in the category of weak, dreamy mystics and thus denying them power. I knew that the most successful reports in class were those which merely repeated what the teacher herself had said. But how could I repeat what made no sense? I found myself arguing, trying to defend my position. I left the class feeling as if my leptons were no longer in orbit.

That evening I sat in my apartment, on one of Ray’s chairs, trying to figure out what had happened. It was strange to find something that had once absorbed me so quickly transformed into musty, foul-smelling words. I thought of Dostoyevski, chattering away in his icy room, seized with the flu or perhaps remembering his near execution. Charlotte Brontë, trimming her cuticles by the open fire. Florence Nightingale, sanctimonious in her bandage-wrapping. These people had a lust, an infectious greed, a passion for life. If smallpox and polio vaccines hadn’t been developed, I figured, I would have been one of the ones to keel over by now. Maybe I was just tired; it would be good to have a break at Christmas.

But I didn’t feel any different during vacation; by New Year’s Day I had decided not to go back to Yale.

HALF the reason I had decided to go to Yale was that I didn’t get an apartment I fell in love with in New York. The previous summer, I had landed a job as editorial assistant on a magazine—I would be taking over for a woman who was going on maternity leave in September. I had a whole month to find a place to live, but after several weeks of looking I still couldn’t find anything, not even a share. Nell, my mother, came into the city from her house in Southampton to help me. She wore her tattered cardigan with holes in the sleeves and her Red Cross shoes, practical for walking. She said that the way to find an apartment was simply to wander up and down the streets until we saw a sign in a window saying “Apartment for Rent.”

“Ma,” I said. “Maybe that was how you could one time find an apartment, but not anymore.” But she insisted, and on the afternoon of the second day we did see a sign, in a window on the first floor of an old brownstone on Third Avenue in the Twenties. Nobody answered the bell, but we went next door to an antique store and the woman gave us the key to the apartment and said that she was handling the rental for the landlady.

The place was fantastic. It held the sediment of many lives: gilt ceilings, molding in a pattern of vines and leaves covered with many layers of paint, an intricate puzzle parquet floor, like a Parcheesi board, cracked and dented in places, the wood still beautiful. The apartment was two stories high, with a spiral staircase in the dining room that led upstairs to a small balcony with a sleeping area. There was a second bedroom in front, off the living room, which had an ornate marble fireplace. The bathroom was elaborate, with a claw-foot tub and a pedestal sink. The apartment came with its own back yard, fenced in, though bare of plant life. How calm and happy I felt here! It was a place to sit morosely by the open fire in a velvet dress, entertaining an assortment of people I would surely meet. I would plant a willow and a peach tree in the back yard, get a cat.

"I'd never be able to afford this," I said. "I bet it's twenty-five hundred a month."

"You could get a roommate," my mother said. "Maybe it's not so much." My mother, on her stiff stilts of legs, never allowed her face to express much emotion, but I could tell she liked it.

We spoke to the woman in the antique store. She said the rent was six hundred a month, and had scarcely finished the sentence before my mother wrote out a check as a deposit. The woman said she would call the landlady—she didn't see that there would be any problem. I took the train home with my mother; the whole trip we discussed the apartment. She said that maybe the landlady would reduce the first month's rent so that I could get metal security gates installed over the back windows. At six hundred a month, however, it was hard to complain.

When we got home, the landlady called: she hadn't yet spoken to the woman in the antique store when I saw the apartment, but it had been rented only a few minutes before we looked at the place.

"God damn it," I said to my mother. "That was my apartment. It *felt* like my apartment." The flavor of lemons and chalk filled my mouth, the taste of disappointment. This loss was an indication that my whole life was out of sync. Nell was also disappointed. There was nothing she could say or do, but she did show me an article in *Fate* that suggested that possibly I had lived in that apartment in another incarnation but was not meant to now.

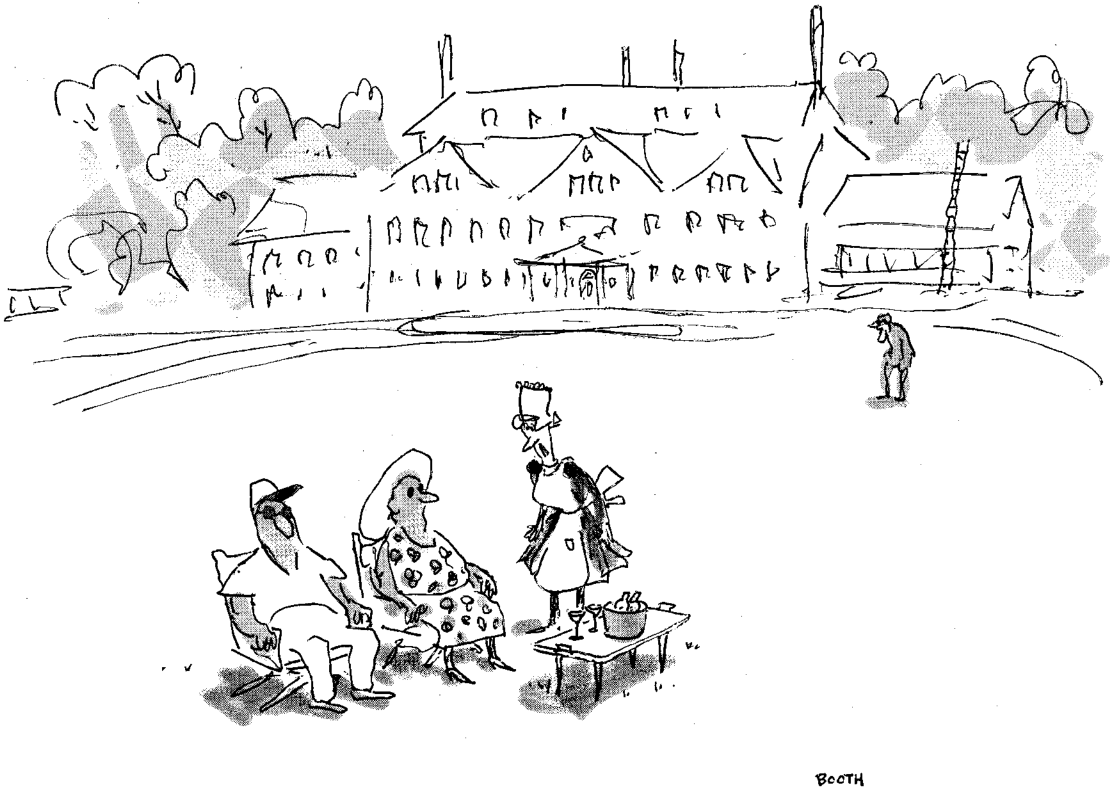
Luckily I had something to fall back on; Yale had accepted me the previous spring, and though I had told them I wasn't going to come, now that I had changed my mind they said I could still attend, but without the scholarship.

Though I had enjoyed living in my own apartment in New Haven, I didn't mind being back at home with my mother. She lived on a suburban side street, far from the large mansions that lined the shore. The tiny house had been built in the nineteen-thirties, before the Hamptons became so popular and expensive. Some summers, my mother went away on a trip and rented out the house for five thousand a month; this summer she had a job as librarian at the Southampton library.

In her house we were constantly tripping over each other, but we didn't get on each other's nerves. We called each other, as a joke, Letitia and Hermione. Though we had never seen the movie "Grey Gardens," about a mother and daughter, related to Jackie Onassis, who never went out of the house and grew old and eccentric together, this was what we imagined we were like. We lived on instant meals ramen noodles, spinach, and snow peas; tuna fish direct from the can; frozen corn fritters heated in the oven; baked potatoes topped with cheddar cheese.

In the afternoons, I rode my bike to the beach and walked up the mile stretch and back, scuffing my feet through the foam at the edge of the waves. I spent a lot of time thinking, What makes me the way I am? O.K., I figured, I was a combination of genetic and environmental accidents. On the other hand, surely my personality wasn't *entirely* beyond my control. It disturbed me that I seemed to be totally uninterested in men. When I went out with them, it was only in order to be able to study them as if they were natural-history exhibits. Captain Ahab couldn't be blamed completely for this. That I *wasn't* worried about finding someone—this wasn't normal, according to the magazines. Even Anna Castleton had turned away from men only because they had proved to be so rotten.

The way I felt now, I wasn't really interested in any aspect of life. Not in the least bit. Perhaps I would continue



"Mr. Blanny has suggested that, this being almost September, and he finished late getting the storm windows in place, perhaps it would give us a chance to catch up if we skipped replacing them with the screens and go right into winter with the storm windows already in place just this one time."

"*Verbally speaking . . .*"

• •

to remain at home, my mother and I growing older, more set in our ways, graduating to higher degrees of oddness. Yet what would become of me when my mother grew too old to support us both? Abnormal. I tried to imagine myself decked out in a purple fez, smoking a cigarette in a long ivory holder, sipping absinthe or crème de menthe, and actually speaking to people: having what is known in books as a "conversation." Murmured voices, the sound of brittle chatter across a ruby-lit night club. Yet my imagination couldn't pick up the words.

There were so many ways to fill up a day, let alone a life. I didn't see how I could possibly cram anything—anyone—else into my hours. For example, one afternoon I spent three hours reviewing the contents of a sweepstakes brochure that came in the mail. It took time to figure out the rules of the sweepstakes; apparently one had to purchase an item of jewelry for four dollars and ninety-nine cents before the entry form could be considered valid. Though I knew I'd never enter, I felt obliged to read about each item of jewelry: elegant "love" ring with genuine diamond; Pegasus pendant with genuine ruby and swirl of faux diamonds; Princess Di's famous sapphire-and-diamond engagement ring; the Diamond Wedding Cross, Symbol of Eternal Unity. The descriptions were written in a style as interesting to me as my feminist crit. courses had once been.

IN May I received a letter from Ray. He had been looking for me all semester and had asked Yale for my address, but they refused to give it out. As a last resort, he decided to write to me at my old address, and the letter was forwarded. All spring I had been gardening with a frenzy: the small fenced-in back yard hadn't been touched in years. On her days off, my mother sat in the yard in a screened-in tent house from Sears—insects bit her even when no one else was bothered—and watched me at work. I spent hours in the sun, stooped over the splotchy faces of pansies, puffy foxgloves, and inebriated daylilies, glossy as honey, quivering with palsy. The flowers trembled in the salt air. My fingers were raw. I refused to wear gloves, and my hands were permanently veined with dirt.

"Go ahead," my mother said. "Call him. You haven't spoken to anyone besides me in months."

"I don't like him," I said. "He makes me feel like he's going to throw me into a coffin and walk around on top of it." But I called him up and asked him to dinner. He was ready to come out that night, but I told him to wait until the weekend.

For his visit, I made chili and corn bread and a salad; I supposed I really had been cut off for quite a while. I found myself going out of my way to dress up, to make the dinner elegant. When my mother came home from work, we went out to the yard to sit in the tent house. This was our ritual almost every night. I had a beer, and she had a concoction made from soda, piña-colada mix, and sometimes ice cream. So far she hadn't questioned me about what I wanted or planned to do. I knew she was glad to have me there. We sat in the light of the citronella candle—even inside the screen house, insects somehow managed to bite her—and listened to the crickets and the barking of dogs down the road. The aroma of the raspberry bushes in the yard and the sour smell from the potato fields a half mile away filled the night air.

At eight o'clock, we ate our salad. Ray was supposed to have come at seven. My mother decided to eat her chili. "You and Ray can eat alone," she said.

"Ma, I don't even like this human," I said.

"Well, what did you ask him to come for?"

"*You* told me to invite him."

So we bickered, gently. Still, it was a way to pass the evening. Maybe I had been too harsh in my previous judgment of Ray. Maybe she would find Ray genuinely charming.

At nine o'clock he called from a gas

station; he had gotten a late start and there was a traffic jam.

"He's not even close," my mother said. "Why don't you just tell him to go home? By the time he gets here it'll be ten o'clock."

Ray arrived at ten-fifteen. He brought two bottles of expensive wine; the price stickers were still on them—twenty-nine and eighteen dollars. I didn't even like wine. I wondered how my mother, a tall, thin woman—nearly five feet ten—with the presence of a dyspeptic duchess, garbed in a frowzy old sweater, must have appeared to Ray. He was freshly shaved, smelling of after-shave, and wore raiment that might have been ripped from the pages of some men's magazine. He barely came up to her shoulder.

Ray wasn't hungry, but we ate a little chili and salad and then went out for a walk. At the end of the street was an empty lot someone had turned into a vegetable garden, with neat rows of asparagus, tomatoes, eggplant, and peppers. None of the plants were very big yet. The evening was cool and murky, with a shimmery liquid quality. Ray cleared his throat.

"How's your brother doing?" I said.

"Fine," Ray said. "He has a beautiful Swedish girlfriend. He just got home for the summer."

"How's that crazy cat?" I said.

"Max?" Ray said. "He's fine."

We turned around and walked the other way.

"Listen," he said. "I really want to get married."

"Oh?" I said.

"I mean, maybe you think this is coming out of left field."

"Not if that's what you want to do," I said. "When are you getting married?"

"No, seriously," Ray said. "I was thinking we could go steady."

"I don't even know you, Ray," I said.

"Well, that's O.K.," he said. "You'd get to know me."

I turned to look at him, but he wasn't smiling. I thought I had never met a person who had less to say; nor did I feel any doglike waves of love coming from him. There was simply no connection.

"Do you want to go someplace?" he said. "To a roadhouse?"

"No, I'm pretty tired," I said. I walked with him back to his car.

"Will you call me if you change your mind?" he said. "Think about it, anyway?"

"Don't you want to take your wine back?" I said. "We didn't even open it."

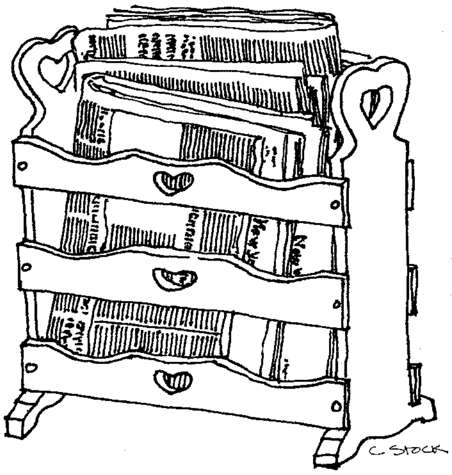
"No," he said. "It's for you. Listen, I don't mean to keep bugging you—"

"That's O.K.," I said. I rubbed my forehead for a second.

"I have to go into the hospital next week," he said. "They're operating on my back. I'll be in the hospital for a while. Could you come and visit me?"

"I guess," I said. "Sure, sure. How did it happen that you fell down an elevator shaft, anyway?" It was strange that I'd never bothered to ask him before.

"My fiancée," Ray said. "It was a New Year's Eve party, and we were engaged—in fact, we were going to be married in a week—and I bumped into her in the bathroom with some guy. I just started running, and it was in an old loft building, and the elevator door opened and the elevator wasn't there."



My mother was still awake when I went to her room. "Did you have fun?" she said. "I can't believe he brought such expensive bottles of wine. Who drinks that stuff?"

"He wants to get married," I said.

"Go ahead," she said. She turned back to her book. "He has small, eloquent feet and hands," she said to the page.

"He likes to try on my shoes," I said.

"As part of sex?"

"We never slept together," I said. "His feet might be small, but I still don't like him wearing my shoes."

My mother shrugged. "If you like him, maybe you could find him a pair in his size at the thrift store."

THE hospital room, on the twenty-second floor, was crammed with masses of expensive floral arrangements: scarlet blossoms springing out of moss, and heathery clouds of purple and violet. I knew just one of the bouquets probably cost enough to feed and keep me for a week. The room had one large window, with a panoramic view of stubby, toylike buildings and a soiled ribbon of East River. Ray was lying on his back, tubes emerging from his arms. He looked white and shrunken, but the operation had been a success. "Sit down, sit down," he said. "Do you want some candy or something?" I shook my head. "There's some lemonade—Minute Maid—if you want."

"So, how are you feeling?" I said.

"O.K."

MILKWEED

Ghost feathers, angel bones, I see them rise
over West Thirteenth Street, unearthly, shining,
tiny Quixotes sailing off to Heaven
right on schedule: it's the end of August.
I'm tired of transcendence. Let's stay home
tonight, just us, let's take the phone off the hook
and drink a peaceable beer on the fire escape.
Across the darkening garden, our lesbian neighbor
is watering her terraceful of scraggly geraniums,
the super and his wife are having a salsa party,
and in a little while the moon will rise
over the weary municipal London plane trees,
and the old classical philologist next door
will look up from his lexicon and remember
that even Zeus came down to us for love.
Love, we could do worse than listen to the city breathing
on its way to bed tonight while overhead
cold galaxies of milkweed stream and stream.

—KATHA POLLITT

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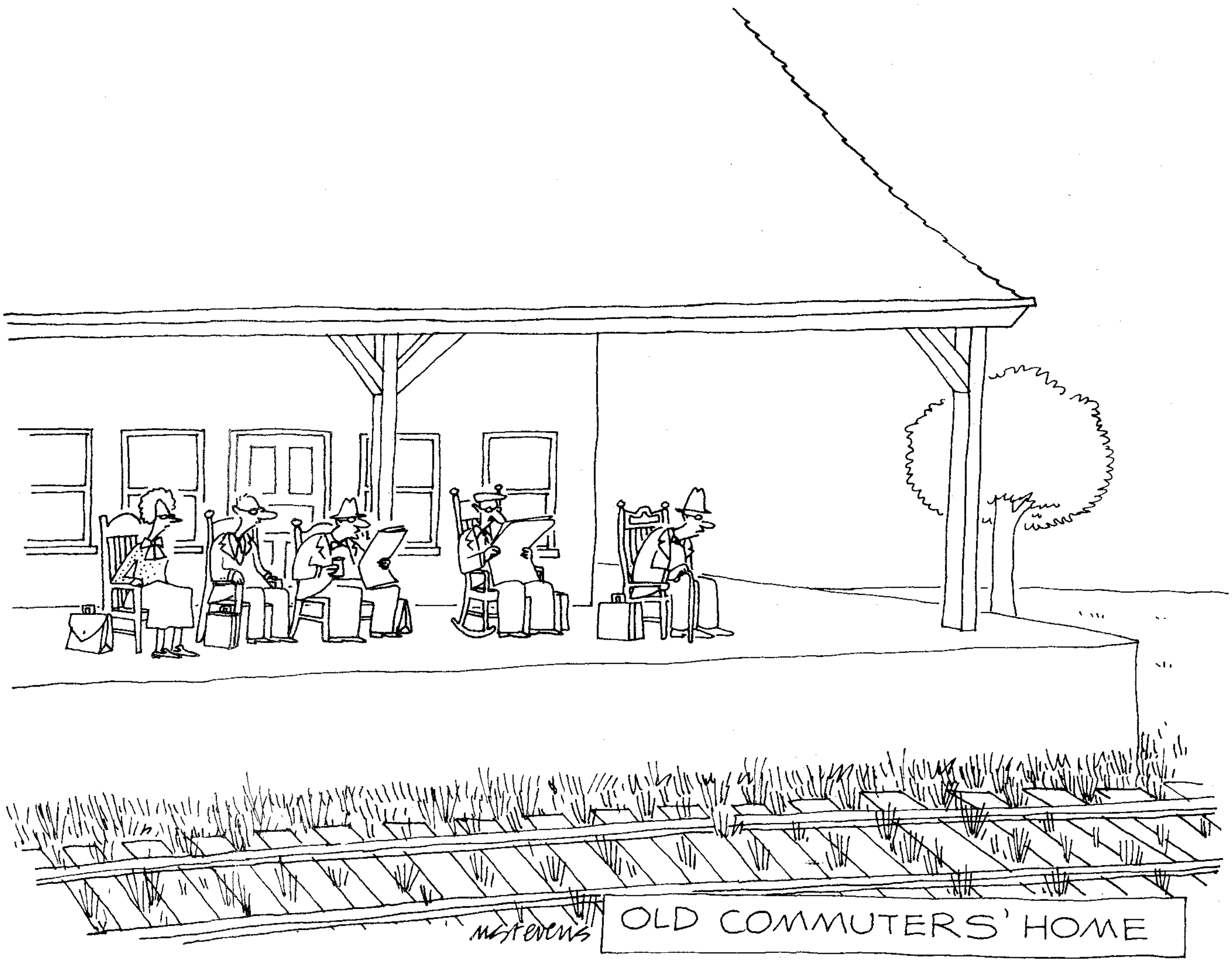


I sat in a chair by the window. "Nice flowers," I said.

His mother swept into the room. She was wearing an expensive-looking outfit in baby pink: trousers, a linen jacket, strands of pink and gray pearls, sling-back pink high heels with rosettes. I studied my feet, realizing too late I should have stood up. Mrs. Connors came over to my chair, bent to embrace me, and pecked me on both cheeks. "Just look at you two," she said. "What a couple of deadbeats! Cora, where have you been? Ray was frantic when you left New Haven. Now, I don't want to interfere; you just tell me to shut up. I don't know what's been going on with you two, but why do you have to live together? Why don't you just get married?"

"Ma," Ray said from his bed.

I smiled. "Those earrings are wonderful," I said. Mrs. Connors was wearing large mulberry-colored cubes, spiked with gold branches like tendrils. They resembled living entities found in a coral reef.

"Look how she tries to change the subject, Ray," Mrs. Connors said. She put her hand up to her ears. "These old things," she said. "They're not real." She unclipped them and handed them to me.

"Nice," I said, studying them.

"They're for you."

"Oh, no, I couldn't."

"No, no, they're for you. I insist. Don't make a fuss, or I'll be very angry."

"Well, thank you," I said. I stood up, with the earrings in my hand. "I guess I'd better go now," I said. "I have to catch my train."

"Where are you going?" Mrs. Connors said. "Back to Southampton? Don't go. You'll stay uptown with us—you can have Ray's room."

"I didn't bring anything with me," I said.

"Oh, we have everything," Mrs. Connors said. "We'll go out right now and buy a toothbrush. Ray talks non-stop about you, and I've hardly gotten a chance to see you."

"I really can't stay," I said. I went over to the side of Ray's bed and bent to kiss him goodbye.

"You'll call me later?" Ray said.

He pulled me down by the arm. I thought he was going to whisper something to me, but when he didn't I said, "I'm glad the operation was a success."

I MADE my mother answer the phone, but Ray didn't call. In the fall, I found a job working for a publishing company in Manhattan and began the rounds of looking for a place to live. One Monday morning there was an ad in the paper for a studio apartment on a block near Central Park West. I had already checked out that block—mostly brownstones—and the blocks nearby; it was a nice area. The apartment was dark, but the building was quaint, and I could almost afford it. I left a small deposit with the landlady. The woman was going to call my references, and I was to leave my security deposit and first month's rent with her that afternoon.

I had the rest of the morning to fill. For some reason, I decided to go back downtown to the area where I saw the apartment with my mother the previous summer. I still felt that that was really my apartment. Maybe by chance the tenants had moved out and there was once again a "For Rent" sign in the window. For less money than I would be paying for the uptown place, I could have had a whole floor-through—sunny, with a yard. As I got near the address I felt the strong feeling—the sense of place, whatever—coming back even more intensely than on the first visit.

Standing in the front entrance of the building was Ray.

"Hi," he said.

"Ray," I said. "What are you doing here?"

"My father bought the first floor," he said.

"I don't believe this," I said. "I tried to rent this place last year. I came back to look."

"The building went co-op a little while ago," Ray said. "We're in the middle of renovating." He seemed pleased with himself; I wondered if he thought I had come looking for him. "Do you want to come in?" he said.

The first floor had been completely stripped. Now the rococo molding was gone, there was wall-to-wall carpeting and track lighting. The bathroom fixtures had been replaced with modern ones. It was probably neater and cleaner, but the crazy charm of the place was gone. Now that it had new windows and plain doors, it was just like a million other apartments.

I looked out a window to the back yard; it had been paved over with bricks, and small trees were stuck into redwood planters. It was too cold to go outside, and Ray said I should sit down for a minute. He pointed to a gray sofa. "I'm in the middle of working on a project," he said. "For my parents. They bought a house upstate and hired me to renovate."

I said I was about to go and put a deposit on an apartment uptown.

"We're just subletting a place right now," Ray said. "As soon as this place is finished, in a couple of weeks, then we can move in."

"Who's we?" I said.

"I got married last month," Ray said. He looked at me with a wry expression. I thought he was waiting for me to burst into tears. "My father got us this place as a wedding present."

"Oh, how great!" I said. "Congratulations! Who is she?" My voice sounded artificial, not because I was upset over this news but because I just didn't care. "Someone I know?" I said.

"No, no," Ray said. "She's a secretary at my firm; she just started work there a few months ago."

"You didn't know her before?"

"No," Ray said. "It was just one of those things that happen fast."

"Great," I said.

His small, worried eyes fixed on me with a combination of rage and love.

"I have to get back to work now," Ray said. "I'm glad you stopped by. I had hoped we wouldn't lose touch. Listen, would you like to have dinner with me? Just the two of us?"

"When?" I said.

"I don't know," Ray said. "Tonight."

"Um," I said. "Well, I have a bunch of things to do. Why don't I call you later this afternoon?"

"O.K.," Ray said. "And if you can't make it tonight, maybe we could have lunch next week. Do you still have the furniture I gave you?"

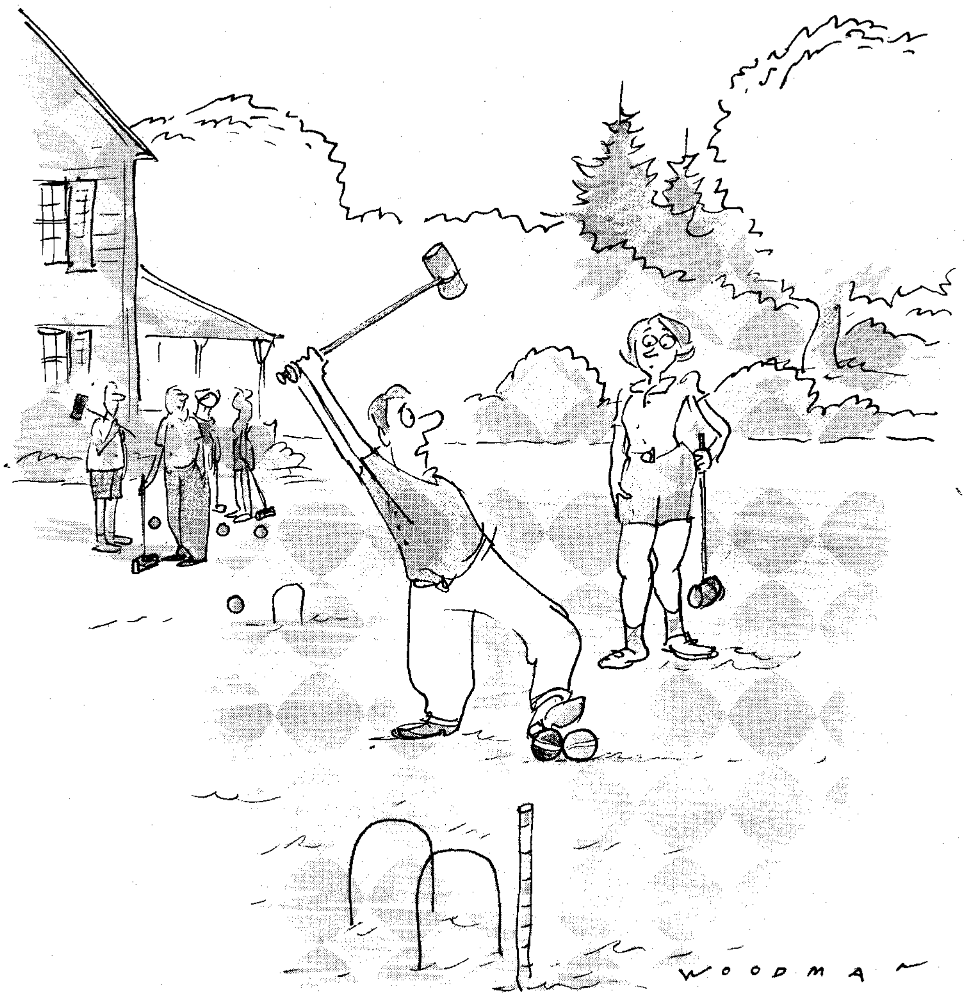
"Oh, yes."

"I'll be here all afternoon. Also I'll give you my number at work."

I took his phone numbers, written on the back of a card. Out on the street, I went to a nearby phone booth and called my mother, who was having lunch with friends in the city. We met on Thirty-fourth Street to go shopping for shoes. My mother bought me two pairs: gray pumps, with a medium heel, and a pair of purple sandals, which resembled, at least as far as I was concerned, those worn by French prostitutes. They weren't practical, but I liked them.

A while later I saw Ray's father on television—a morning talk show—kicking a mattress to demonstrate construction. He was a vigorous man, and he chuckled to the host as he ripped open the ticking and pulled out the stuffing.

—TAMA JANOWITZ



"Sorry, Marge, but I've got to be me."

•

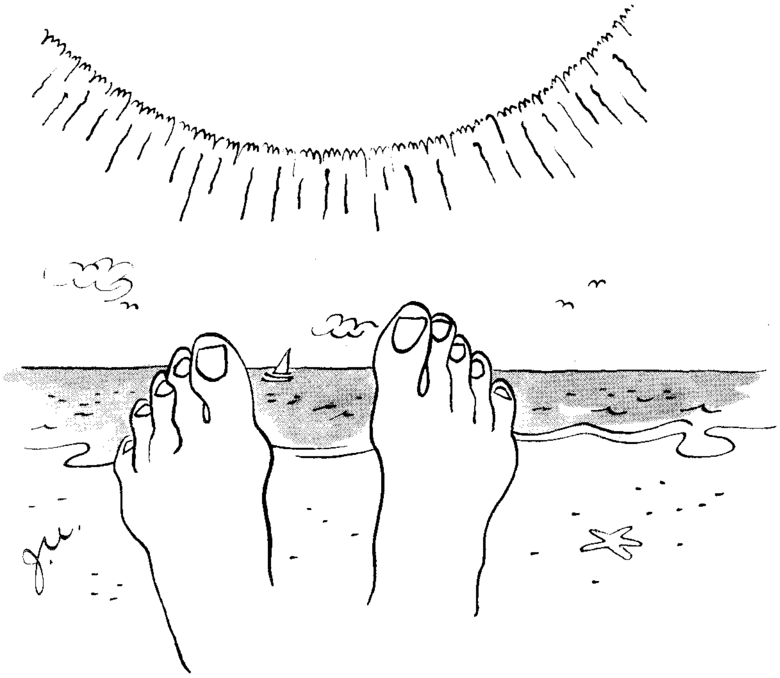
WORDS OF ONE SYLLABLE DEPT.

[*Adv. for McDonnell's Restaurant in the Honesdale* (*Pa.*) *Wayne Independent*]

"OUR PRICES ARE EXCEEDED ONLY BY OUR GRATITUDE"

PERSONAL HISTORY

AT WAR WITH MY SKIN



MY mother tells me now that I was six when the psoriasis showed; I had imagined that she had earlier told me I was three. The disease—"disease" seems strong, for a condition that is not contagious, painful, or debilitating; yet it has the volatility of a disease, the sense of another presence coöccupying your body and singling you out from the happy herds of normal mankind—first attached itself to my memory while I was lying on the upstairs side porch of our house in Shillington, Pennsylvania, amid the sickly, oleaginous smell of Siroil, on fuzzy sun-warmed towels, with my mother, sunbathing. We are both not quite naked. She would have been still a youngish woman at the time, and I remember being embarrassed by something, but whether by our being together this way or simply by my skin is not clear in this mottled recollection. Siroil and sunshine and not eating chocolate were our only weapons in our war against the red spots, ripening into silvery scabs, that invaded our skins in the winter. Siroil was the foremost medication available in the thirties and forties: a bottled preparation the consistency of pus, tar its effective ingredient and its drippy texture and bilious color and insinuating odor deeply involved with my shame. Yet, as with our own private odors, those of sweat and earwax and even of excrement, there was also something satisfying about it, an intimate rankness that told me who I was.

One dabbed Siroil on; it softened the silvery scales but otherwise did very little good. Nor did abstaining from chocolate and "greasy" foods like potato chips and French fries do much visible good, though as with many palliations there was no knowing how much worse things would be otherwise. Only the sun, that living god, had real power over psoriasis; a few weeks of summer erased the spots from all of my responsive young skin that could be exposed. Inspecting the many photographs taken of me as a child, including a set of me in a bathing suit cavorting in the back yard, I can see no trace of psoriasis. And I remember, when it rained, going out in a bathing suit with friends to play in the downpour and its warm puddles. Yet I never learned to swim, because of my appearance; I stayed away from "the Porgy," the dammed pond beyond the poorhouse, and from the public pool in West Reading, and to the travails of my freshman year at Harvard was added the humiliation of learning to swim, with my spots and my hydrophobia, in a class of quite naked boys. Recently, the chunky, mild-spoken man who taught the class over thirty years ago came up to me at a party and pleasantly identified himself; I could scarcely manage politeness, his face so sharply brought back that old suppressed rich mix of chlorine and fear and brave gasping and naked, naked embarrassment.

Psoriasis, we now know, is a metabolic disorder that causes the epidermis, which normally replaces itself in the course of several days, markedly to speed up the process and to produce excess skin cells. The tiny mechanisms gone awry are still beyond the reach of internally taken medicine; powerful drugs like methotrexate and cortisone help, but at the price of side effects perhaps more serious than the disease, which is, after all, superficial—too much, simply, of a good thing (skin). In recent years, dermatologists at Massachusetts General Hospital have developed PUVA, a controlled light treatment called photochemotherapy: fluorescent tubes radiate long-wave ultraviolet (UV-A) onto skin sensitized by an internal dose of methoxsalen, a psoralen (the "P" of the acronym) derived from a weed, *Ammi majus*, which grows along the river Nile and whose sun-sensitizing qualities were known to the ancient Egyptians. So a curious primitivity, a savor of folk medicine, clings to this new cure, which is not a total cure but the closest thing to it likely to emerge in what is left of my lifetime. I am grateful. It is pleasant, once a week, to stand nearly naked in a kind of glowing telephone booth. It was pleasant to lie on the upstairs porch, hidden behind the jigsawed wooden balusters, and feel the slanting sun warm the fuzzy towel while an occasional car or pack of children crackled by on Shilling Alley. One became conscious, lying there trying to read, of bird song, of distant shouts, of a whistle calling men back to work at the local textile factory, which was rather enchantingly called the Fairy Silk Mill.

My condition forged a hidden link with things elemental—with the seasons, with the sun, and with my mother. A tendency to psoriasis is inherited. My mother had it; that was why she was on the porch with me. Her mother had had it, I was told, though I never noticed anything wrong with my grandmother's skin—just her teeth, which slipped down while she was napping in her rocking chair. Far in the future I was to marry a young brunette with calm, smooth, deep-tanning skin and was to imagine that thus I had put an end to at least my particular avenue of genetic error. Alas, our fourth child inherited my complexion and, lightly, in her late teens, psoriasis. The disease favors the fair, the dry-skinned, the pallid prog-

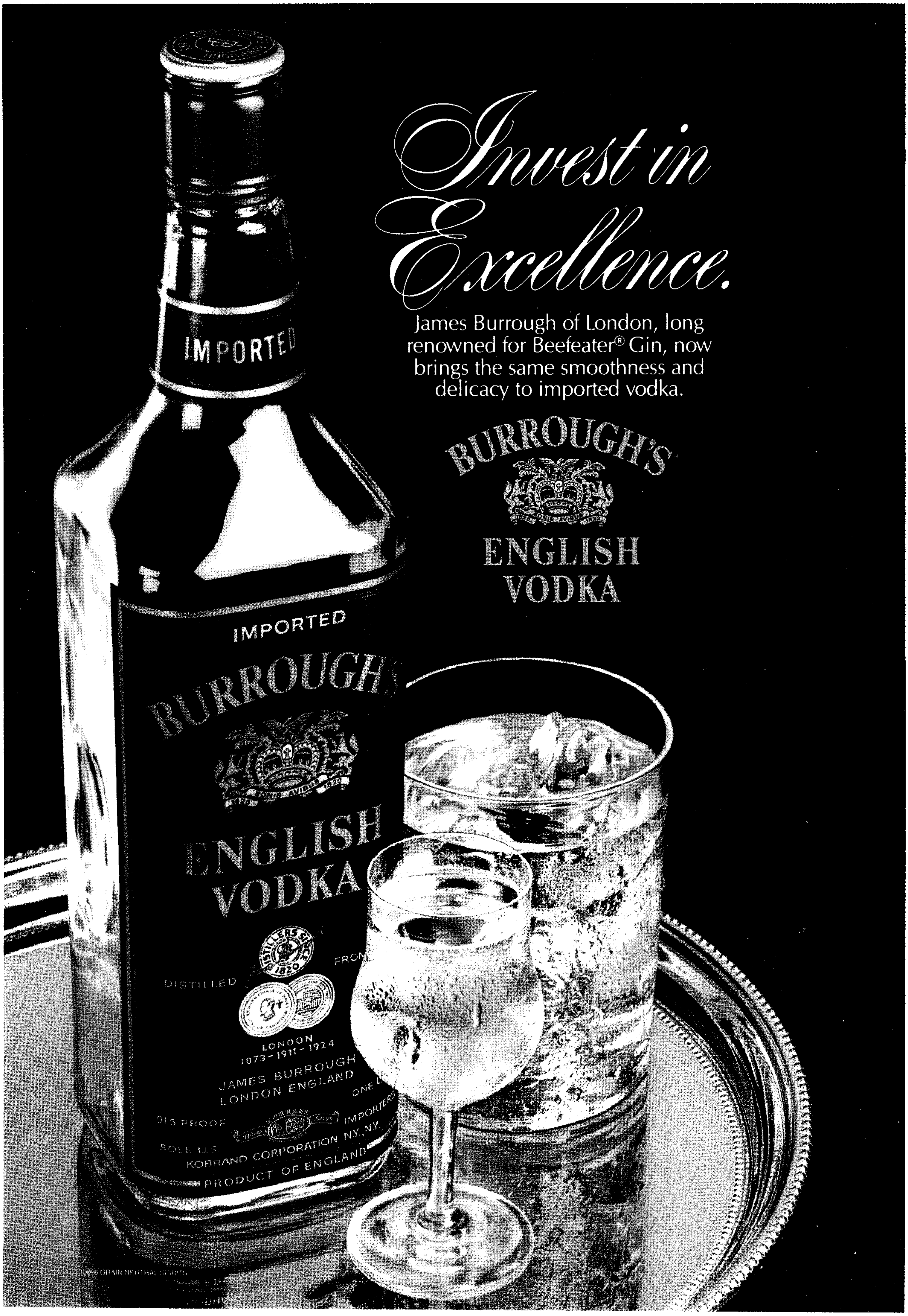
"That's why I've succeeded in this business, Whipple—I love glass!"

• •

eny of cloud-swaddled Holland and Ireland and Germany. Though my father was not red-haired, his brother Arch was, and when I grew a beard, as my contribution to the revolutionary sixties, it came in reddish. And when I shaved it off, spots had thrived underneath.

Psoriasis keeps you thinking. Strategies of concealment ramify, and self-examination is endless. You are forced to the mirror, again and again; psoriasis compels narcissism, if we suppose a Narcissus who did not like what he saw. In certain lights, your face looks passable; in slightly different lights, not. Shaving mirrors and rearview mirrors in automobiles are merciless, whereas the smoky mirrors in airplane bathrooms are especially flattering and soothing: one's face looks tawny as a movie star's. Flying back from the Caribbean, I used to admire my improved looks; years went by before I noticed that I looked equally good, in the lavatory glow, on the flight down. I cannot pass a reflecting surface on the street without glancing in, in hopes that I have somehow changed. Nature and the self, the great moieties of earthly existence, are each cloven in two by an ambivalent, fascinated attention. One hates one's abnormal, erupting skin but is led into a brooding, solicitous attention toward it. One hates the Nature that has imposed this affliction, but only this same Nature can be appealed to for erasure, for cure. Only Nature can forgive psoriasis; the sufferer in his self-contempt does not grant to other people this power. Perhaps the unease of my first memory has to do with my mother's presence; I wished to be alone with the air, the sun, the distant noises, the possibility of my hideousness gradually going away.

I recall remarkably few occasions when I was challenged, in the brute world of childhood, about my skin. In the third grade, perhaps it was, the teacher, standing above our obedient rows, rummaged in my hair and said aloud, "Good heavens, child, what's this on your head?" I can hear these words breaking into the air above me and see my mother's face when, that afternoon, I recounted them to her, probably with tears; her eyes took on a frantic glare and the next morning, like an arrow that had fixed her course, she went to the school to "have it out" with the teacher who had heightened her defective cub's embarrassment. Our doctor, Doc Rothermel, in his big grit-and-stucco house beyond a retaining wall decorated with concrete orbs, also, eerily, had psoriasis; far from offering a cure out of his magical expanding black bag, he offered us the melancholy confession that he had felt prevented, by his scaly wrists, from


IMPORTED
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BURROUGH'S
BONIS AVIBUS
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1873-1911-1924
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ENGLISH VODKA

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"The market was volatile."

• •

rolling back his sleeves and becoming—his true ambition—a surgeon. " 'Physician, heal thyself,' they'd say to me," he said. I don't, really, know how bad I looked, or how many conferences among adults secured a tactful silence from above. My peers (again, as I remember, which is a choosing to remember) either didn't notice anything terrible about my skin or else neglected to comment upon it. Children are frank, true, as we know from the taunts and nicknames they fling at one another; but also they all feel imperfect and vulnerable, which works for mutual forbearance. In high school, my gym class knew how I looked in the locker room and shower. Once, a boy from a higher class came up to me with an exclamation of cheerful disgust, touched my arm, and asked if I had syphilis. But my classmates held their tongues, and their fear of contagion, if any.

I participated, in gym shorts and tank top, in the annual gym exhibitions. Indeed, as the tallest of the lighter boys, I stood shakily on top of Fats Sterner's shoulders to make the apex of our gymnastics pyramid. I braved it through, inwardly cringing, prisoner and victim of my skin. It was not really *me*, was the explanation I could not shout out. Like an obese person (like good-natured Fats so sturdy under me, a human rock, his hands gripping my ankles while I fought the sensation that I was about to lurch forward and fly out over the heads of our assembled audience of admiring parents) and unlike someone with a withered arm, say, or a port-wine stain splashed across his neck and cheek, I could change—every summer, indeed, I *did* become normal and, as it were, beautiful. An overvaluation of the normal went with my ailment, a certain idealization of everyone who was not, as I felt myself to be, a monster. Because it came and went, I never settled in with my psoriasis, never adopted it as, inevitably, part of myself: it was, instead, a constant rude awakening.

My last public demonstration of my monstrosity, in a formal social setting, occurred the day of my examination for the draft, in the summer of 1955. A year in England, with no sun, had left my skin in bad shape, and the examining doctor took one glance up from his plywood table and wrote on my form, "4-F: Psoriasis." At this point in my young life I had a job offer in New York, a wife, and an infant daughter, and was far from keen to devote two years to the national defense; I had never gone to summer camp, and pictured the Army as a big summer camp, with extra-rough bullies and extra-cold showers in the morning. My trepidation should be distinguished from political feelings; I had absolutely no doubts about my country's need, from time to time, to fight, and its right to call me to service. So suddenly and emphatically excused, I felt relieved, guilty, and above all embarrassed at being singled out; the naked American men around me had looked at my skin with surprise and now were impressed by the exemption it had won me. I had not foreseen this result; psoriasis would handicap no killing skills and, had I reported in another season, might have been nearly invisible. My wife, when I got back to my parents' house with my news, was naturally delighted; but my mother, always independent in her moods, seemed saddened, as if she had laid an egg which, when candled by the government, had been found rotten.

It pains me to write these pages. They are humiliating—"scab-picking," to use a term sometimes levelled at modern autobiographic writers. I have written about psoriasis only twice before: I gave it to Peter Caldwell in "The Centaur" and to an anonymous, bumptious ceramicist in the short story "From the Journal of a Leper." I expose it this third time only in order to proclaim the consoling possibility that whenever in my timid life I have shown some courage and originality it has been because of my skin. Because of my skin, I counted myself out of any of those jobs—salesman, teacher, financier, movie star—that demand being presentable. What did that leave? Becoming a craftsman of some sort, closeted and unseen—perhaps a cartoonist or a writer: a worker in ink who can hide himself and send out a surrogate presence, a signature that multiplies while it conceals. Why did I marry so young? Because, having once found a comely and gracious female who forgave me my skin, I dared not risk losing her and trying to find another. Why did I have children so young? Because I wanted to surround myself with people who did not have psoriasis. Why did I leave New York and my snug employment there? Because my skin was bad in the urban shadows, and nothing, not even screwing a sunlamp bulb into the socket above my bathroom mirror, helped. Why did I move, with my family, all the way to Ipswich, Massachusetts? Because this ancient Puritan town happened to have one of the great beaches of the Northeast, in whose dunes I could, like a sin-soaked anchorite of old repairing to the desert, bake and cure myself.

EVEN now, over a decade since I left, Ipswich excites me to be in. On its familiar streets, greeted by small memories, reminiscent faces, altered façades, and enduring outlines, I feel lighthearted, desirable, healthy. I have presence. If Shillington gave me my life, Ipswich was where I took possession of it, the place where in my own sense of myself I ceased to be a radically defective person.

I brought to the town, at the age of twenty-five, a number of tics and inabilities that seventeen years of life there pretty much eased away. In Ipswich, for instance, I stopped choking. My grandmother would sometimes choke on her food, and have to go out on the side porch in Shillington, where one or another member of the family would follow and hammer on her back while she clung, gagging, to the porch rail. It was one of our observances, marking our familial awkwardness, our shared tension. Whether by inherited tendency or imitated example, I, too, would choke now and then, and my album of sore moments holds a memory of crouching above my tray in the Lowell House dining hall at Harvard, miserably retching at something in my throat that would not go up or down, while half-swallowed milk dribbled from my mouth and the other students at the table silently took up their trays and moved away. On the edge of asphyxia, I sympathized with them, and wished I could shun me also.

I had come to Harvard with not only this disgusting, frightening tendency, and an excitable stammer, and my skin, but a morbid fear of spiders and insects—specifically, a fear that they would become very large, a frequent theme of the movies and adventure stories of my boyhood. This phobia was not soothed by the growing power of photographers, as lenses and film improved, to bring us, in such educational magazines as *National Geographic*, images of the enlarged anatomies of bees and dragonflies, of sideways-munching mandibles and hairy pronged forelegs, of segmented antennae and many-facetted, hemispherical eyes. A playful roommate put on my desk one such spread of blowups—especially vivid, in color, on the big pages of *Life*. Both offended and alarmed, I "acted out" my genuine fright and tried to flush the bristling, staring pages down the toilet. They were too large, and stiff, to go down, and kept sluggishly rising with their complicated and merciless faces, and I had to keep poking them with a ruler, to encourage them to vanish. I could not bear to touch them with my hands, and, even now, have a hard time plucking the bodies of dead wasps from the winter windowsills, where they get trapped behind the storm panes. Another roommate, from nearby Winchester, invited me home for a meal; I was served the great New England treat, lobster. I could not believe, seeing this scarlet arachnoid form set proudly before me, that I was expected to eat it, to take it into my fingers and tear off and suck its brittle limbs. My roommate's mother, much as she might have tossed together a vegetable meal for a Hindu friend her son had brought back from exotic, broadening Harvard, kindly fried up a hamburger for me instead.

In Ipswich, I learned to eat lobster. I learned to grapple in the tidal mud for the edgy smooth forms of clams, like rocks except they are alive, and feel alive, with an ever-so-subtle sense of motion in your palm, even of emotion as in their dark clenched housing they find themselves pulled up out of the safe muck and tossed into the bucket where, with something like nervousness, they cleanse themselves

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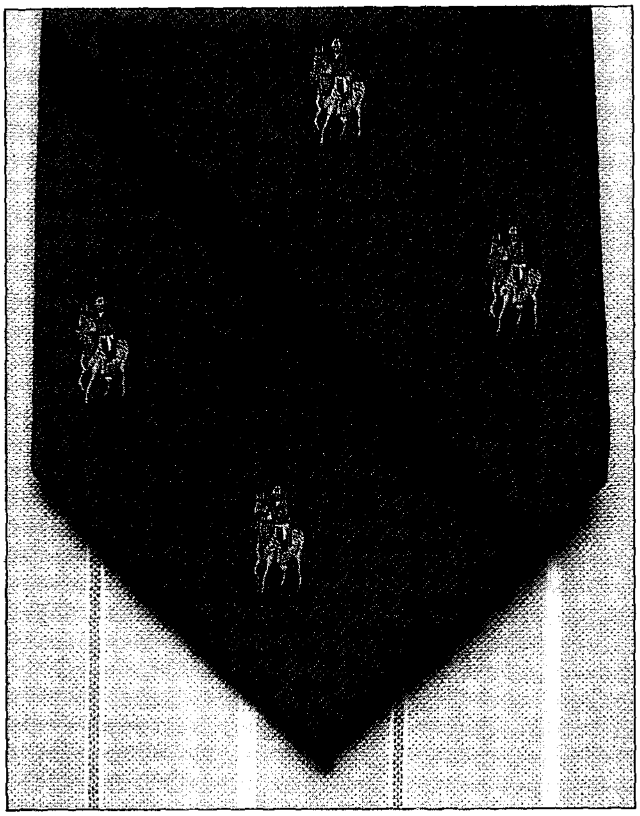
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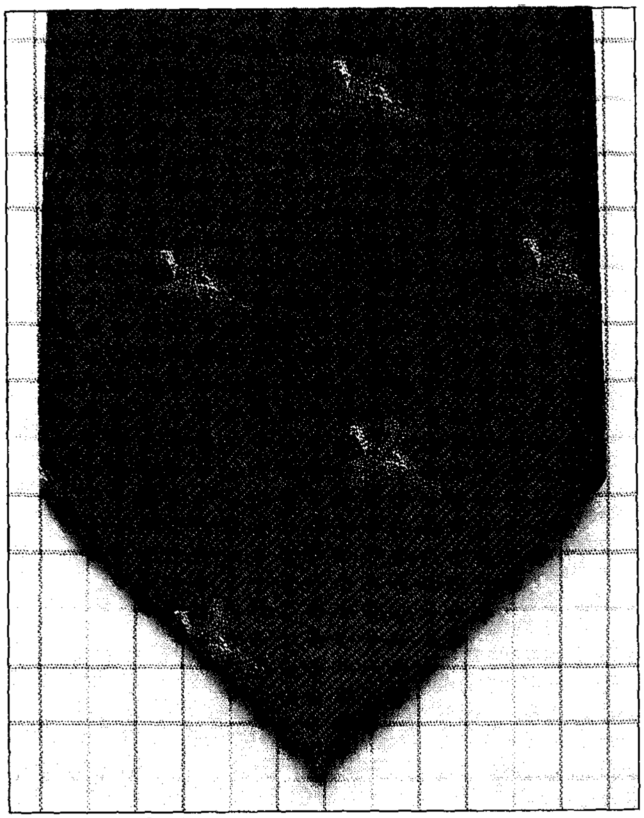
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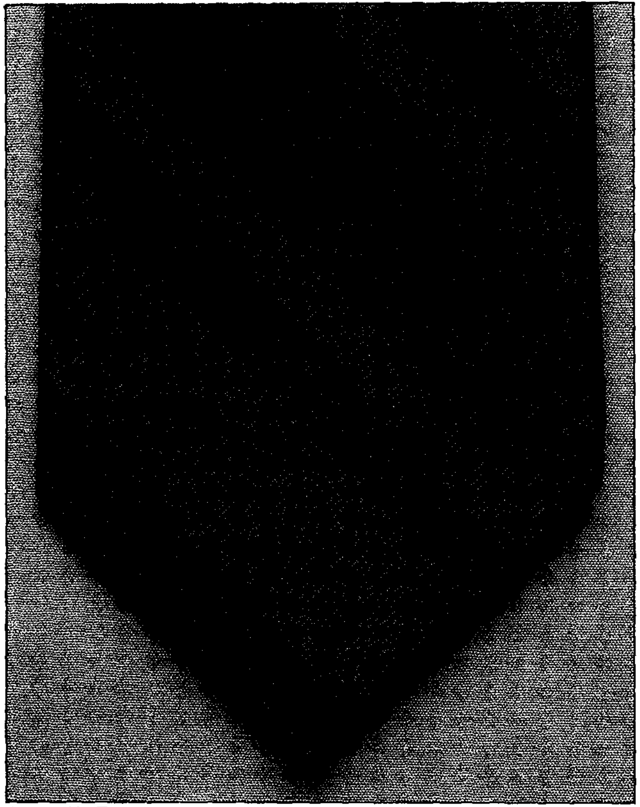
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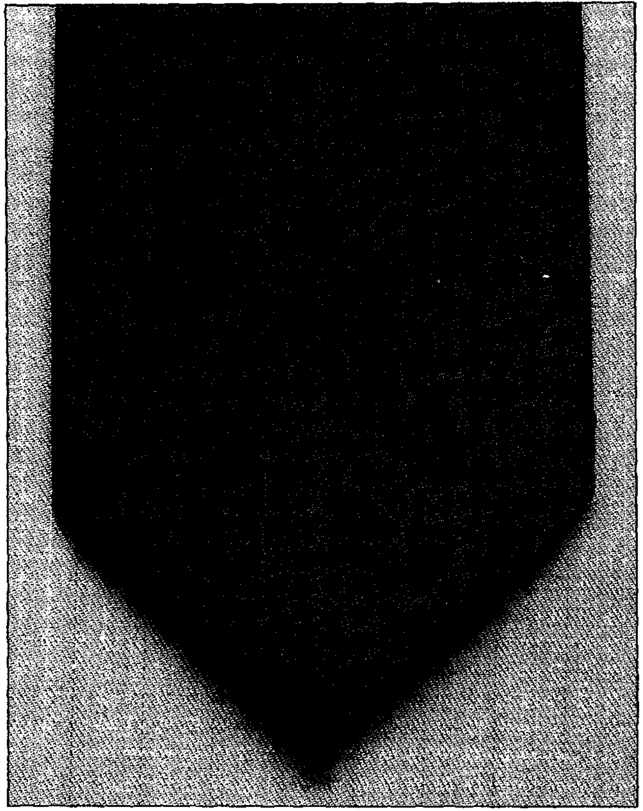
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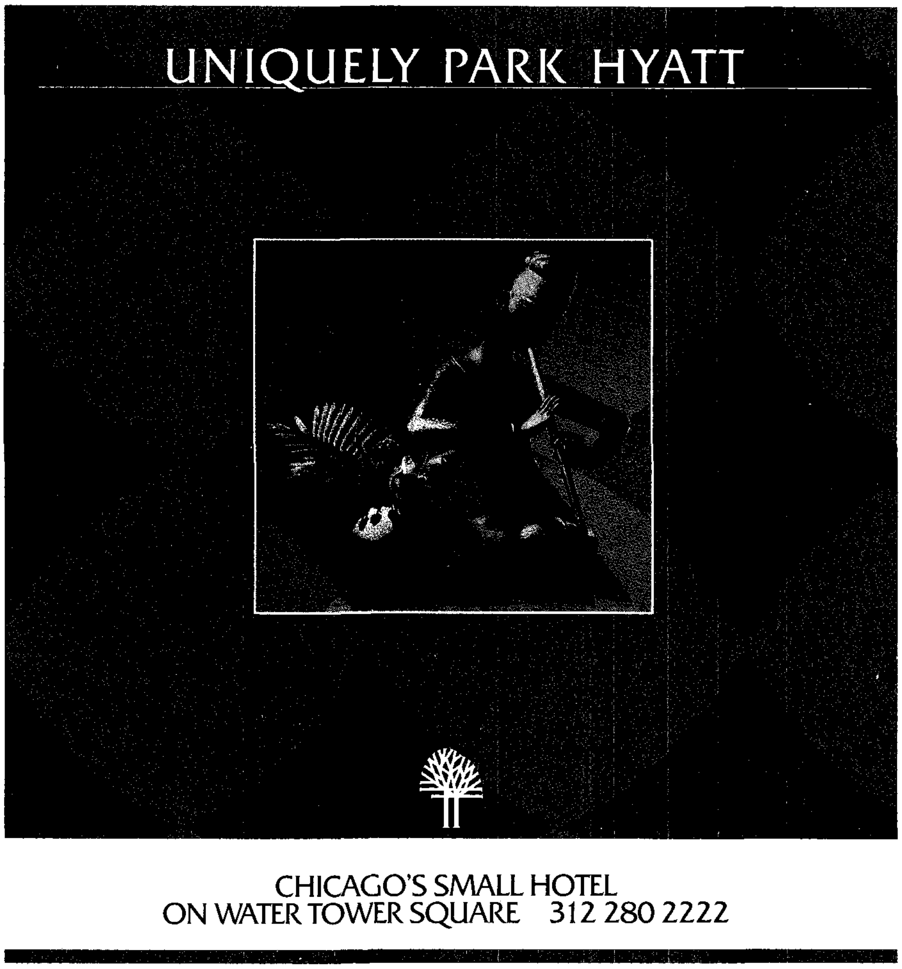
Resilio
NECKWEAR

preparatory to being steamed. I learned to strip the steamed clam (its shell unhinged in death and rather touchingly thin) of the rubbery little sleeve on its neck and to plop the whole slippery loose remainder, with its stringy and problematical anatomy, into my mouth. All sorts of squeamishness was teased and goaded out of me in Ipswich, by women who seemed gorgeous and men who seemed knowledgeable and staunch. I, whose idea of summer bliss had been day after identical day at the Shillington playground, with its drowsy rounds of roofball and box hockey and Chinese checkers, learned to play the rich child's games of tennis and golf, and to ski. Above all, I learned, in the buoyant salt water of the beach and the tidal creeks, to swim, without fear—though the thought of sharks did now and then cross my mind and nibble my toes, and, submerged in a friend's swimming pool, I would torment myself with the fantasy that I was caught belowdecks in a sinking ship, and must twist my way through narrow, darkening hatchways to the surface before my lungs exploded.

My wife and I found ourselves in a kind of "swim" of equally young married couples, an hour north of Boston and dependent upon each other for entertainment. There was a surge of belonging—we joined committees and societies, belonged to a recorder group and a poker group, played volleyball and touch football in season, read plays aloud and went Greek-dancing and gave dinner parties and attended clambakes and concerts and costume balls, all within a rather enclosed community, so that everything resonated. The sisters and brothers I had never had were now on the phone or at the back door; the "gang" was, at last, all here. As a group, we had lovely times being young adults in Ipswich, while raising our children more or less absent-mindedly and holding down our jobs in much the same style.

My profession of free-lance writer was strange here, but not so strange as it would have been in Shillington. Several publishers, retired and active, were among the grandees of Argilla Road. John Marquand sometimes came down from Newburyport to appear at an Ipswich cocktail party, and a number in the genteel older generation that had us frisky newcomers in for drinks had published books. Further back, John Wise's defiant sermons and Nathaniel Ward's "Simple Cobler of Aggawam" had been penned



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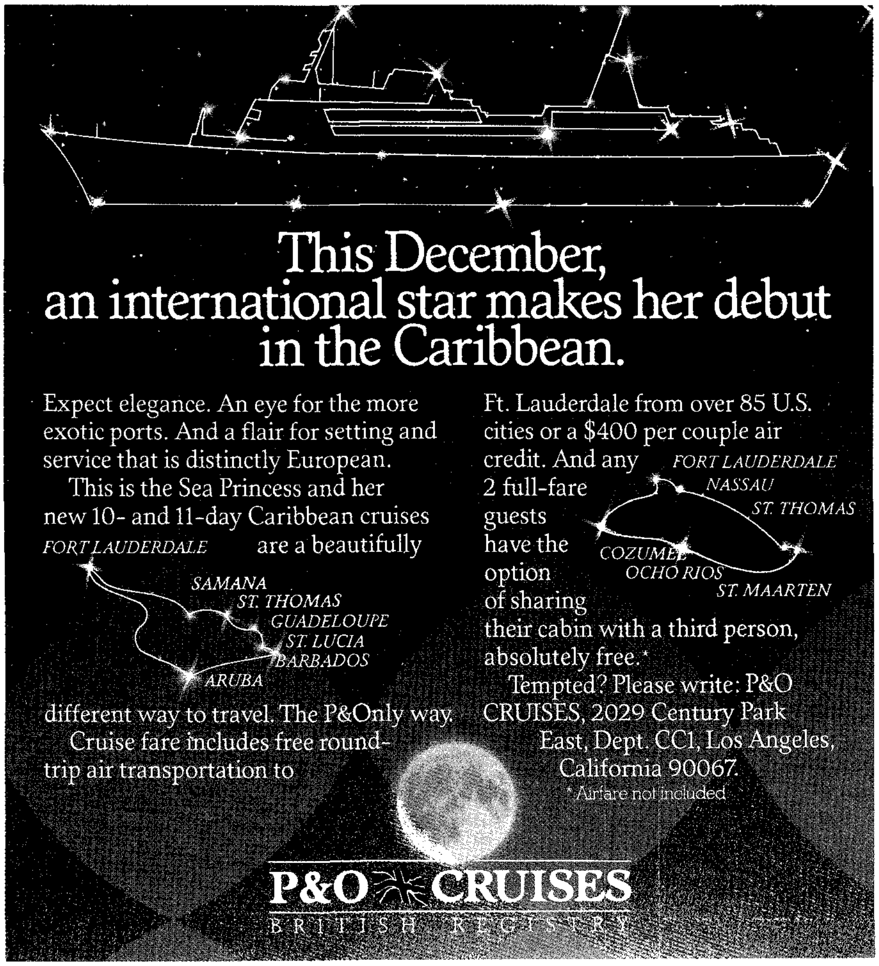

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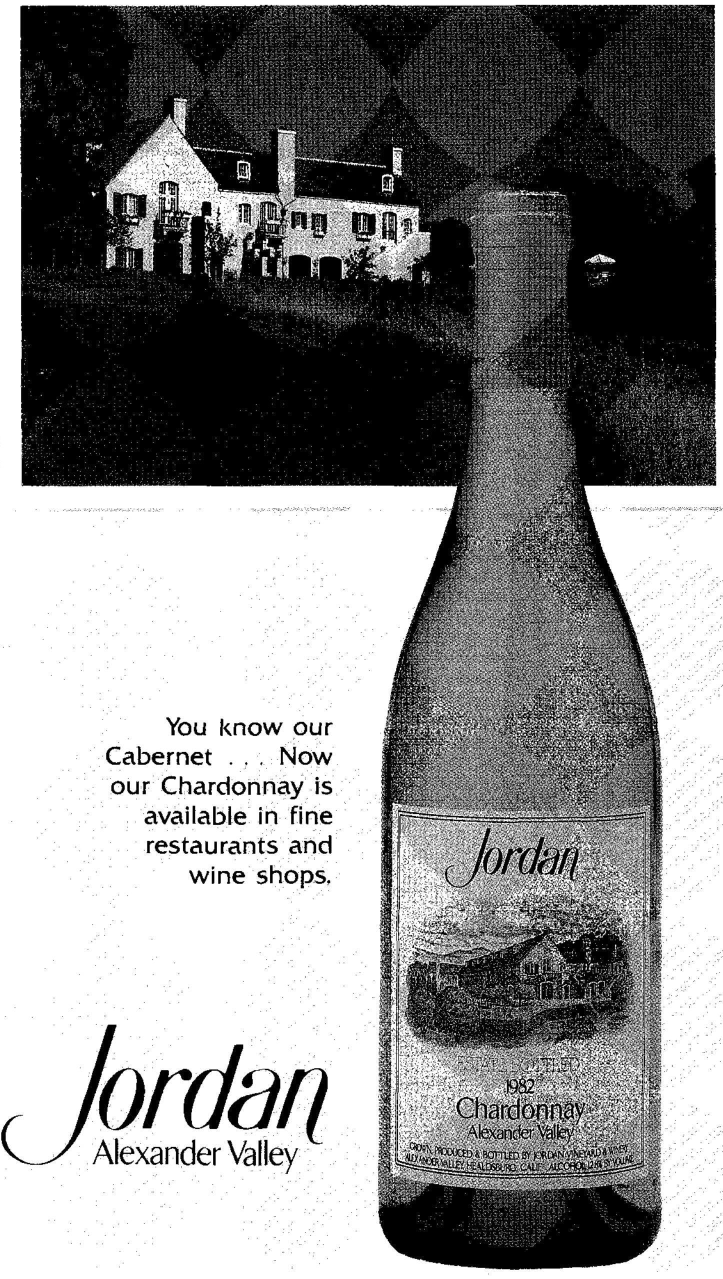
in colonial Ipswich, and Anne Bradstreet had written some of the New World's first poems a few blocks from where we lived on East Street for thirteen years. The town, which billed itself as "The Birthplace of American Independence," had always been a maverick kind of place; alone among the major settlements of Essex County, it stood aloof from the witch hunt of 1692, and turned back the delegation from Salem—the legend went—at the Choate Bridge. For witches and writers, Ipswich was out of harm's way. I loved it all—its authentic depth of history, its great changing marshes and winding odd-named roads (Turkey Shore, Heartbreak, Labor in Vain), its social and ethnic variety, its homely hodgepodge downtown, its casual acceptingness of me. I remember early in our days there coming back to the town from several days in New York, to which I still travelled, laboriously, by train; tired from the seven-hour trip, I walked from the station with my suitcase, on a winter night, up to the high school, where the annual town meeting was in progress. I gave my name, was checked off and admitted, and stood there in the doorway of the auditorium in my city suit, looking in at the brightly illuminated faces of my fellow-citizens. They were agitated by some thoroughly local issue on the floor; my wife and the friends we had made were somewhere in this solemn, colorful, warm civic mass, and I felt a rush of wonder that I had come to be part of this, this lively town meeting sequestered within the tall winter night. It occurs to me now that this was the same crowd as had come to the Shillington gym exhibition, seen from a different angle.

I turned thirty, then forty. My four children went to private nursery schools, then the public schools, and then one by one, for all my secret hopes of their becoming cheerleaders and quarterbacks, they drifted into private education, into the orbit of the North Shore upper class. This class was of no interest to me; I saw myself as a spy within average, public-school, supermarket America, and children are what welds a family to a town, its meetings and elections, its circles and cliques. Like my father I had left my native state and moved to my wife's region, and, acquiring more financial ease than he ever had, I took perhaps even more pleasure than he in the transactions of a middle-class man with his society, from a joking relation with the brothers who ran the liquor

CHARDONNAY



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Jordan
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store to membership on the church building committee (at my urging, we had joined the Congregational Church) and a camaraderie with its jolly Christian stalwarts. In Ipswich my impersonation of a normal person became as good as I could make it. I choked only when attempting an especially hearty vitamin pill, and a stammer rarely impeded my incessant sociability.

The tunnels—tending to pass through the throat—between my self and the world were open to traffic. My phobias eased, though I was still not charmed when a daddy longlegs came to assist me as I painted storm windows in the cellar and in his survey lost, gruesomely, one leg after another to the wet paint. The existential terrors that had driven me, after college, in Oxford and New York, to Chesterton and Aquinas, Kierkegaard and Barth, were eased aside by the coöperative nature, now, of growing older. The couples we knew were also aging, and also had given ever more demanding and uncontrollable hostages to fortune, and paid rising taxes and suffered automobile accidents and midnight illnesses and marital woe; but under the tireless supervision of gossip all misfortunes were compared, and confessed, and revealed as relative. Egotistic dread faded within the shared life. We celebrated each other's birthdays and breakups in a boozy, jaunty muddle of mutually invaded privacies. In "The Late George Apley," an old Bostonian claims he doesn't care where he goes after death, Heaven or Hell, as long as his fellow club members are there. There is an illusion of eternal comfort in clubbiness—an assurance that members of tribes and villages have extended to one another for millennia, the assurance that no earthly adventure, from puberty to death, is unprecedented or incapable of being shared and that one's life is thoroughly witnessed and therefore not wasted. It was potentially terrifying, to advance into time—every day, a new newspaper on the porch!—toward death, but like an army taking comfort in its own massed song and smell we pressed forward. The weekend get-togethers supplied courage to last the week. And there was, in those Ipswich days, for me at least, a raw educational component; though I used to score well in academic tests, I seemed to know wonderfully little of how the world worked and was truly grateful for instruction, whether it was how to stroke a backhand, mix a Martini, use a wallpaper steamer, or do the Twist. My wife, too, seemed willing to learn. Old as we must have looked to our children, we were still taking lessons, in how to be grown-up.

FROM April to November, my life was structured around giving my skin a dose of sun. In the spring, though the wind off the sea was cold, the sun was bright and the hollows in the dunes were hot. I would go there alone, with a radio and a book, and without benefit of lotion inflict upon myself two hours of midday ultraviolet. I wanted to burn; my skin was my enemy, and the pain of sunburn meant that I had given it a blow. Overnight, the psoriasis would turn from raised pink spots on white skin to whitish spots on red skin; this signalled its retreat, and by June I could prance back and forth on the beach in a bathing suit without shame. To add to my exposure in those sunny years, I bought convertibles, and would drive back up Argilla Road admiring my red, stinging nose and forehead in the rearview mirror and singing in happiness, be-

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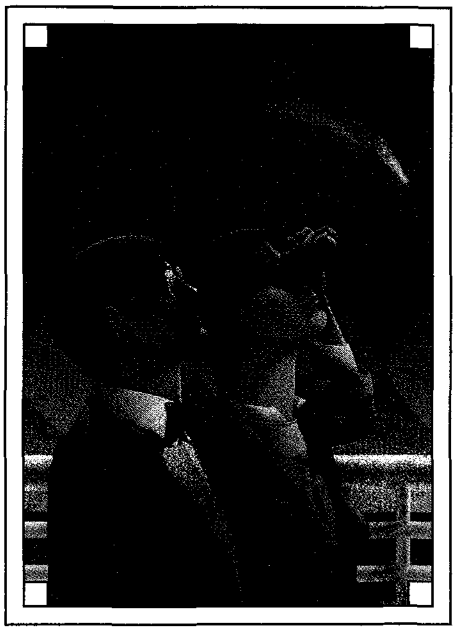

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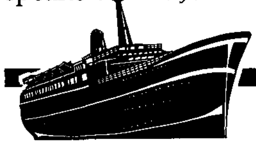

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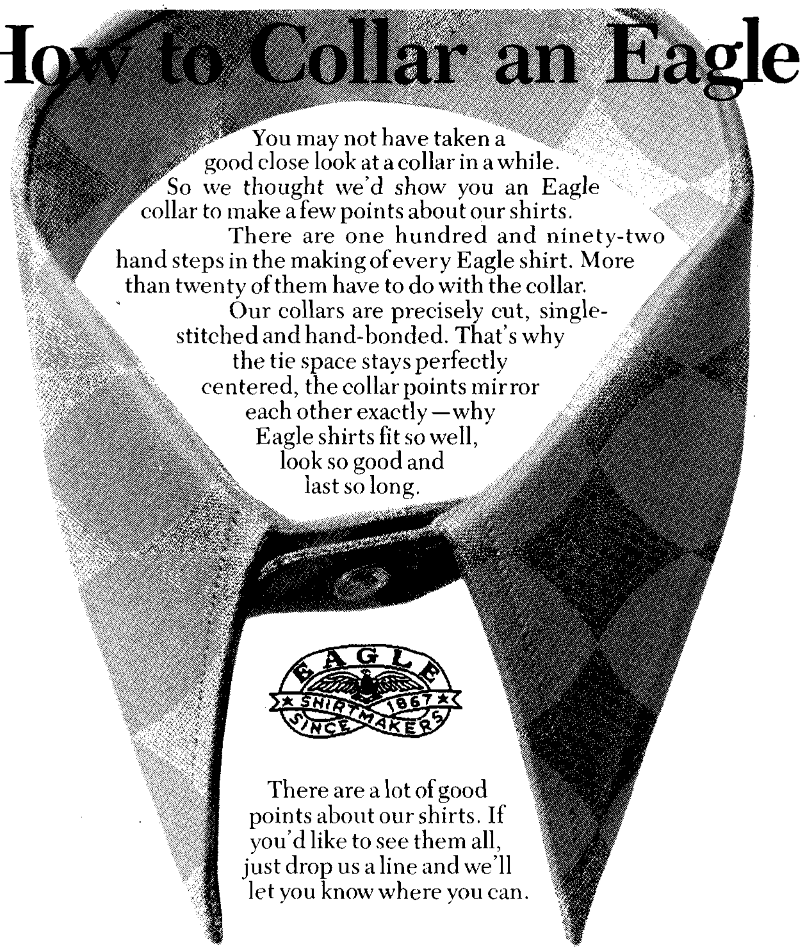
cause normality was on the way; I had packed in a day's worth of radiation.

In the meantime, my pariahlike solitude in the dunes felt somewhat majestic, amid the sandy immensities back from the beach, before summer had begun, when there were no other persons to be seen but a few bundled dog walkers and perhaps a pair of riders galloping their horses along the ocean's sliding, foaming edge—Ipswich Bay, with a broad sandbar a half mile out, rarely admitted surf of any real thump. Once down in my chosen hollow and stripped to the bathing suit I had worn beneath my trousers, I was out of sight, out of the human world indeed. The world of the dunes, in summer too hot to inhabit, in spring still held puddles of snowmelt. The chill wind whipped a white haze from the rippled surfaces of the dunes and, when I laid my head on the towel, tried to fill my ears with sand. As the minutes went by, silent but for the concussion of the waves on the distant beach and the cry of a gull like a sudden bubble in the smooth blue glass of the sky, the meagre details within my hollow were magnified by boredom almost into omens. The rusted cans and charred driftwood left by a bonfire last autumn; the circles and half circles that the sharp bent wands of beach grass scribed about themselves; the tenacious gnarled beach-plum bush that gestured at me from a sandy ridge; the sand itself, so minutely sparkling and facetted, spilling warmly through my fingers as, lying there sun-stunned, I idly dug down through the dry top layer to the cooler, more stable and secretive moist darkness beneath. Nature in its starkness and intricacy and uncomplaining monotony enclosed me in my wide trough of sand while a tumble of mauve and gray spring clouds poured by overhead, blotting the sun for resented minutes. At first, it seemed these natural appearances, these grains and leaves and sticks and stubborn xerophytic threads, would speak to me, like the shapes of letters or at least like the intelligible tracks the gulls and deer and rabbits left on the dampish floor of the hollow. Lying there in the service of my skin, I had plenty of time to learn a language; but my communion, for those many seasons of scorching self-cure, was with an inflexible, if benign, speaker of an alien tongue: Nature pronounced a round, firm word, over and over, but no translation was ever offered as to what the word might mean.

It was least stupefying in the dunes

How to Collar an Eagle



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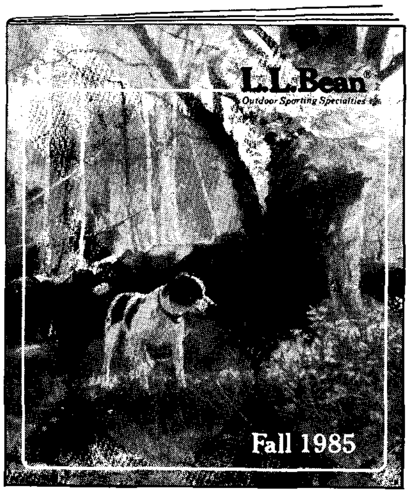

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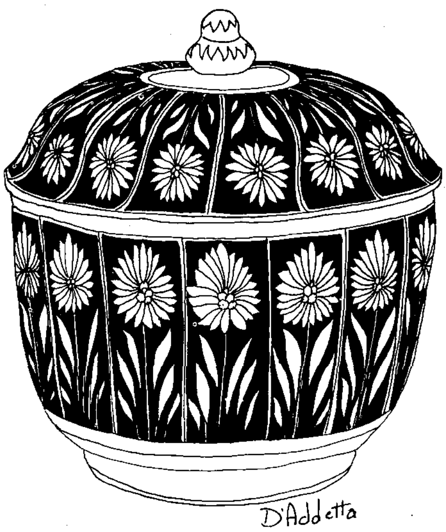
if a Red Sox game was on the radio. I had moved to New England, in part, to be closer to Ted Williams. But by two o'clock, when the afternoon games started, the healing rays had tipped too far from the zenith. Before two, there was music on the radio, with news on the half-hour. The early-rock overture to the counterculture sounded, to me, merely noisy; I longed to hear the mellow saxophones and lilting clarinets and muted trumpets of late-forties high-school dance music, faded forever from the airwaves. There were games one could play, patterns both tactile and visual one could fiddle at while the sun flattened the brain to a rosy blankness. I would spit, and watch the little blots and balls of mud fade back into pale, crystalline sand. I would put a stick in the sand to make a sundial. And of course I tried to write and read; but always with a sense of mental effort and optic abuse that led to faint headaches and nausea. Ultraviolet light, which breaks down the DNA in overexposed skins, also attacks consecutive thought. Writing is a thoroughly shady affair.

The first year in Ipswich, I wrote in a little marble-floored room at the back of the house we rented on Essex Road; one winter night a storm blew the door open and filled my boxes of manuscript with snow. In the seventeenth-century house that we bought, I worked in a tiny corner room upstairs, looking out upon the intersection of East and Spring Streets, my eyes level with the limbs of a great old elm and the crossbars of an especially complicated telephone pole. By late 1960, our fourth child was born, and the house was full of commotion and small emergencies that seemed to invite my participation; I was surprised when my wife suggested that she was tired of making lunch for me every day and that my presence was not really indispensable. And so I rented a room downtown, four blocks away. The beginning rent was eight dollars a week, and my frugal landlord, observing that I didn't sleep there, would turn off the radiator every night, so on winter mornings I would face a room cooled to the right temperature not for writing but for running in place, wearing gloves and a hat.

In summer, though, what ripeness of life it seemed, to put in a few hours at the typewriter and then race downstairs (the room was above a restaurant) and leap into a station wagon or convertible containing my wife and quartet of children, all plump and brown in their bathing suits! They would have brought mine and I would change in the car as my wife drove the five miles to the beach. Then, there, to be waved past the ticket booth by its pith-helmeted guardians, who knew us by sight and name, and to proceed to the town lot to which our taxes and beach sticker entitled us, and to park, and unload our lunch basket, our toys, our towels and mats and paperbacks, and to walk down the boardwalk in procession, myself the leader and evident support of so much healthy flesh —what bourgeois, pagan bliss! In New York City, sallow and spotty, I had gone to the Forty-second Street library's collection of telephone books and looked down the column of names under Ipswich and imagined myself among them; now I was here, a citizen in good standing, partaking of the splendid local summer as if entitled since birth. We would settle ourselves on the hard cool flat stretch of beach between the icy blue sea, which invited only the fanatically hardy in for more than a dip, and the loose white sand beyond the high-tide mark, which burned your feet if you did not step quickly. Along this stretch, beside the water's edge, was a promenading of friends and strangers, of caramel-colored teen-agers and middle-aged men with shrunken legs and grizzled barrel chests, of wasp-waisted homosexuals from Boston and pregnant young brides here for a week of vacation. It was, for me, a matter of pride, a willed achievement, to be among these nearly naked strollers, to be an inconspicuous part of this herd, to be in this humble sense human.

A KIND of fly called the greenhead arose from the extensive marshes in late July, in unstoppable numbers; this obtuse pest bit, with a curiously hot and malevolent chewing action, and rendered the outdoors uninhabitable for the first weeks of August. We began to rent for a month on Martha's Vineyard, to escape the greenheads and to return, in a sense, to New York, whose literary circles supplied a significant portion of the Vineyard's summer people. It was a life in another sort of sun, an all-day sun, enjoyed while reading proof on the porch overlooking Menemsha Bight, or playing tennis on the glaring clay courts at the Chilmark Community Center, or sailing across warm salt ponds to South Beach, where giant heavy waves towered and (a pale celery-green light shining through at the moment of cresting) crashed in a sportive, challenging way not seen in Ipswich Bay. One dived straight into them or underwent a terrifying tumble. One took showers in wooden outdoor stalls and walked naked across the prickly, sandy lawn. The Vineyard was soaked through and through with summer, like an old pine picnic table left outside beside the rusty barbecue grill. There were clay cliffs, and Indians, and softball games. The air was moist and bright, a kind of robe we all wore. Without the incentive of my skin, I would never have pushed myself into this paradise, among Cambridge professors and Manhattan word merchants—most of whom took a better tan than I did.

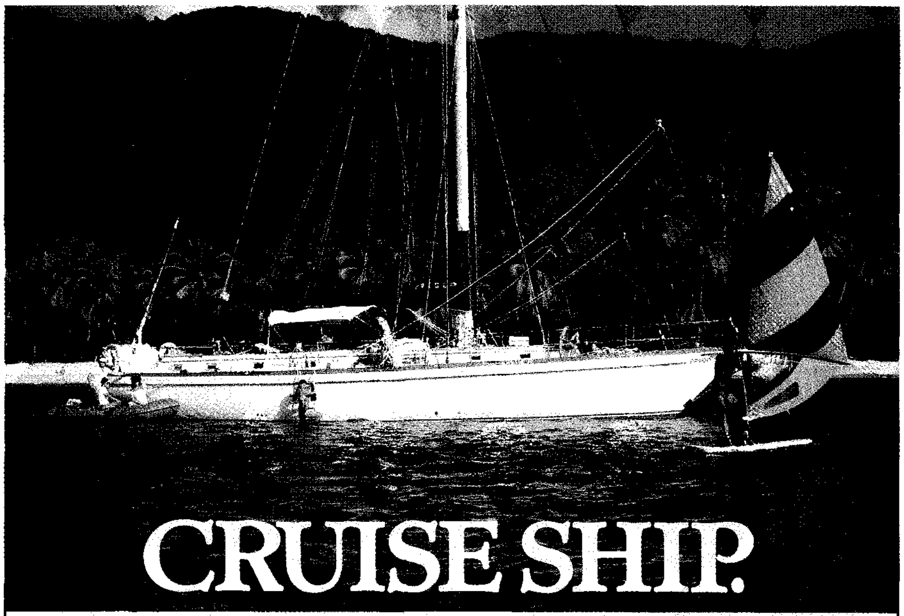


A bit of psoriasis, erased, seems to steal a little melanin away with it; my skin, always freckled, had developed small freckles of pallor, across the shoulders and upper arms especially, so that, examined closely, it showed the chromatic complexity of mottled linoleum or a Pollock masterpiece. Also, in August, when the summer's harvest of swarthiness and glow should have been at the heaviest, small hard raised spots would appear: the psoriasis was fighting back. My skin, once so thirsty and grateful for solar rays, and so sensitive to them, had grown toughened and bored over the years. By November, however many October noons I had gone to the beach and forced myself into the bitter blue water and lain there glistening and shivering on the deserted sand, my skin would have become again a cause for self-consciousness; by January, it was time for my trip to the Caribbean. For my search for superficial perfection had additionally goaded me all the way to the tropics, where an old-fashioned Shillington boy would never have thought to go, where the air, the music, the vegetation, the houses, the accents of the people, and their color were all entirely and excitingly different, where even the clouds and the stars presented different formations.

For the first Caribbean trip, in the winter of 1960, we all went—my wife and I and our then three children. Elizabeth was in kindergarten, David was three, and Michael, born seven months before, was diagnosed before we left to have feet that needed straightening. Daisy and Selma, the two servants who came with the house we had rented on the island of Anguilla, used to pack his squarish, toed-in feet in the sand—an act of magic not much different from the plaster corrective casts he eventually wore. We had thought to spend the entire winter in the sun, and a friend of a friend knew Anguilla to be remote and seldom visited and therefore cheap. We established communication, via fragile blue air-letter forms that arrived in Ipswich wrinkled and bleached as if by the salt spray and sunshine at their source, with a Mr. Gumbs, who rented us "the Captain's House," in the part of Anguilla called Sandy Ground. The geographical divisions of the island were simplicity itself—Valley, Road, East End, West End—and the Captain's House turned out to be the mansion of its modest neighborhood: a solid two-story structure of which we occupied the second story only. The lower, of stone and permanently shadowed by our veranda, was occupied by a short dark woman who could be seen spreading her clothes to dry on the bushes around the house and who otherwise broke into our consciousness rarely, but for two occasions I remembered in the stanza of a poem:

> The night Rebecca's—
> she lived beneath us—
> sailor lover returned from sea
> and beat her for hours,
> it was as hard to sleep as the time
> she tied a rooster
> inside an oil drum.

From the front veranda one looked straight down a kind of grassy roadway at the beryl-colored sea and a blunt cement-and-wood structure that served as a quay; there was no more elaborate dock on the island, and supplies were rafted in to the beaches. We ate vegetables canned in England and balls of fried dough that Daisy called "bakes" and, for protein, freshly caught fish or some poor scrawny chicken brought alive to us for inspec-



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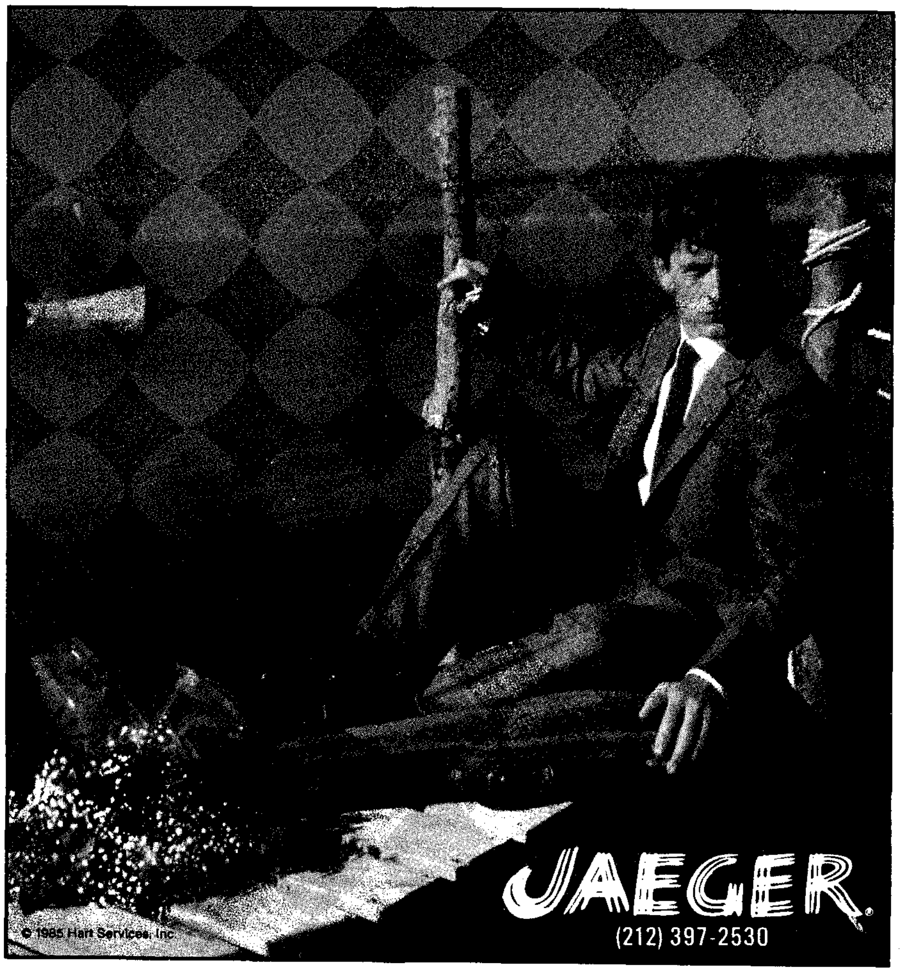
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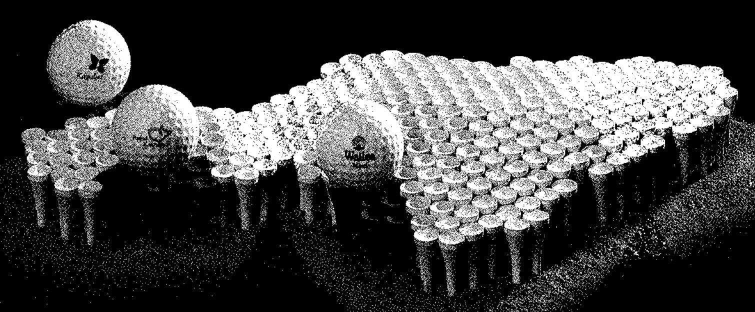

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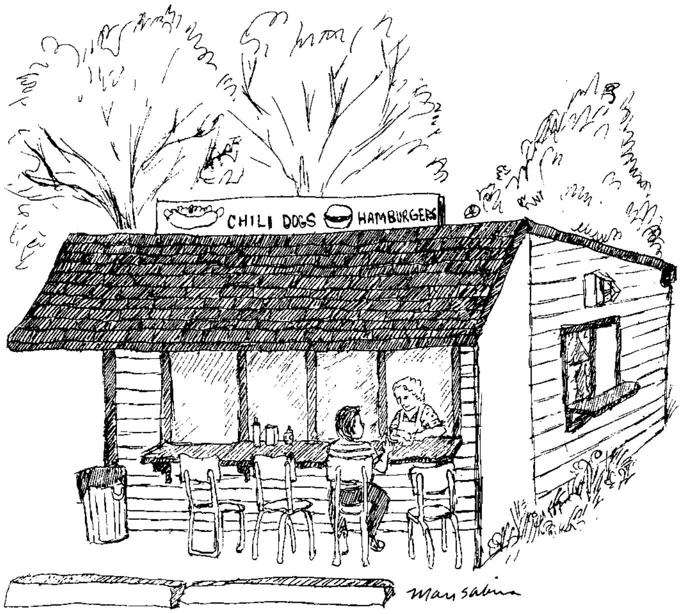
tion and then clumsily killed with a machete in the yard. A tiny boy, Hilton, the same age as my Liz, was handed the machete one time by the squeamish Daisy and he and the chicken had a prolonged time achieving the latter's death, as it raced squawking around the threadbare yard with its half-severed head at an angle. A small population mysteriously arose from Sandy Ground to serve us; in addition to Daisy, the cook, and Selma, the babysitter, there was a handsome boy, older than Hilton, who every morning pumped up water out of our cistern into our holding tank, and Eliot Carty, called Mr. Eliot, who had a Jeep and would give us rides to "town"—to the "Factory" (general store) in Valley. Though at night Sandy Ground became as dark as the jungle, with huge black insects hurling themselves against our hissing tilly lamps and centipedes the size of mice pulsing in the shadowy corners, and though it more than once occurred to me that our mass murder would take a week to make the North American newspapers, we were, I can appreciate now, well looked-after and sustained by the invisible network of this primitive place.

We were the only white visitors on an almost entirely black, undeveloped island, an extreme backwater in the fast-fading British Empire. Once a day or so, a policeman on a bicycle, wearing a helmet and shorts, would whizz down the road. Small children in blue school uniforms would walk their way to and from a school where they learned the British counties and the monarchs of England. Young women would come to the faucet in front of the Captain's House and fill buckets of water they would carry away on their heads. At night, a boy down the road would practice on his steel drums. For large stretches of the day, nothing at all seemed to be happening; but then the Shillington of the thirties might have looked as dormant and secretive to an Anguillan. The little houses around us, with slat sides and hipped roofs of corrugated iron, generally had their shutters closed. Here and there a man might be hoeing or a woman hanging out wash while hymns out of Antigua blew from the radio on her windowsill. Across the road, in a large house surrounded by a low fence and with a yard shaded by dusty trees dripping clusters of brown pods, lived the other white people in Sandy Ground, an old island family that owned vast stretches of cliff and several costly wooden schooners at anchor in the bay. But they themselves looked like the underfed, squinting people in Dorothea Lange's Depression photographs, and seemed to have much to hide. One of the brothers was always absent; the other, who was present, was usually drunk; of the sisters, one was either crippled or mad and never emerged from the house, and the other sat in her yard, surrounded by fallen palm fronds, and made conversation in a melancholy singsong. Only the old lady, the matriarch, had a certain bounce to her style, and years later, I heard, when Princess Margaret visited Anguilla, affronted protocol by giving the Princess, in the receiving line, a kiss. All the family had that curious complexion of tropical whites—a dingy, mat color, the color of sun avoidance in a climate rife with photons.

The island had been too poor and small to attract many whites and to hold those who did come there. On the East End, an old shipwreck had deposited some Scandinavian sailors whose descendants, though still pale enough to shelter their faces with straw hats, seemed otherwise to have forgotten that they were white. I myself had never been among black people before. They were to me almost entirely a myth, though a benign and significant one, starring Joe Louis, Fats Waller, Marian Anderson, and Jackie Robinson. The Negroes of Berks County were ghettoized in south Reading and could be seen from the trolley car as it passed through to Penn Square. A black family, the Johnsons, attended Shillington High, and were admired for their singing (the girl) and athletic skill (the boys). When one Johnson boy, however, took a white bride, his house somehow burned down. There was, in this southeast corner of Pennsylvania, including Philadelphia, a certain Southern illusion of a mutually enjoyed apartheid—though in doctrine Penn and the Quakers were egalitarian, and in Frederick Douglass's autobiography the thrilling escape into freedom takes the form of the short train ride from Baltimore to Philadelphia. When I worked as a copyboy for the Reading *Eagle,* I was shocked to hear an editor bawl out one of his photographers for bringing back from the city playgrounds too many shots containing "them." It was my belief, at the age of eighteen, that the United States' black tenth had contributed much more than its share of what is distinctive and universally eloquent in American culture and that realizing full equality for blacks was our foremost domestic priority. Nevertheless, however liberal my views, I had no dealings with blacks either as equals or as servants and was shy and nervous with them. At Harvard, there were two blacks in my freshman dorm; friendly as we white boys all wanted to be and believed we were, after freshman year we lost touch, and I later heard that by our junior year both these members of Harvard's tiny, pre-affirmative-action black minority had left the college. And I met no blacks in Oxford, nor in the fifties literary circles of New York, nor in Ipswich. So, as Isak Dinesen grandly puts it in "Out of Africa," "the discovery of the dark races was to me a magnificent enlargement of all my world."

I had the sensation, no doubt subtly racist, of being overlooked and forgiven as, each noon, with my book and sunglasses and towel, I plodded up the arc of dazzling coral beach, past the patchy tin and wooden houses half hidden behind the bushes of sea grape, to sock my spots with sun. One was as alone here as in the Ipswich dunes. The soft, pale ocean, a few steps away, kept up a lulling slap and hiss of advance and withdrawal, and, in front of the high cliff to the left, pelicans dove, collapsing themselves like umbrellas for their long twisting drop to the sea and then struggling back into the air, sometimes with a flash of silver in their pouched beaks. A few hand-hewn sailing vessels rocked in the bay, and an occasional native walked up the beach; it was, for the residents of Sandy Ground, a thoroughfare to their homes. We would exchange a syllable of greeting, and I would try not to cringe in shame. White people were so unusual and odd here, I told myself, that my personal unusualness and dermal oddity might go unnoticed. Small transparent crabs lived in the pure white coral sand, and their cautious scuttlings formed another sort of traffic, once I persuaded myself that, unlike the spiders of evil fantasy, they would not attack me. To them, after all, I was huge, and my arrangement of limbs bizarre. I swam merely to wet my skin and speed the therapy, for a vivid island story told of a woman on the cliff who saw children playing on this beach while a huge shark cruised a few yards from shore, in the very shallow water; she shouted, and the mother rushed from her shack and plucked them back just in time, as if from the tracks of an onrushing locomotive. No such epic predator made a pass at me, but, between the sea grape and the sea, the only sunbather on a mile of beach, while the pelicans monotonously threw themselves toward their glinting prey, I became aware of a possible vantage from which my self-solicitous life was negligible, and my imperfect skin a less than immense matter.

Gratefully, I would return to the house around two and wait for the sunburn to well up at drink time, at the hour when Daisy and Selma, having set dinner on the table, would walk home to their own, along a path that a dike miraculously carried right across the big salt pond behind Sandy Ground. And I was grateful when, in less than a month, my skin had cleared and become as brown as it ever could be, and my beachgoing need be no more than that of my wife and children; as a family, we would walk down toward the dock in the late afternoon and swim as the shadows lengthened and the black children in their blue uniforms, holding their shoes in their hands, walked home along the beach and the fishermen hauled their dories up on



the yielding coral sand, so soft and porous it took a footprint inches deep.

To be forgiven, by God: this notion, so commonly mouthed in shadowy churches, was for me a tactile actuality as I lay in my loathed hide under that high hard pellet, that suspended white explosion, of a tropical sun. And the sun's weight on my skin always meant this to me: I was being redeemed, hauled back into mankind, back from deformity and shame. The sun was like God not only in His power but also in the way He allowed Himself to be shut out, to be evaded. Yet if one were receptive, He could find you even at the bottom of a well; one could board a plane in a blizzard, bounce for a few hours in the fuselage's pastel tunnel, slide far down the lines of longitude, get out, and He would be there, waiting. That sun-softened humid air would hit your face like an angel's kiss at the airplane's exit door. There would be puddles from a momentary tropical shower drying on the runway. Inside the terminal, the black customs officials in their shorts were indolently waiting, and the air was full of black greetings, black languor and laughter, black aromas. Waiting for my baggage to come down the belt, I would unbutton one shirt sleeve and take a peek at my arm. Already, my skin would look better.

AFTER Anguilla, I returned to the Caribbean every year. St. Thomas and Antigua, Aruba and Sint Maarten/St. Martin, St. Croix and Puerto Rico—all were visited, sometimes with my wife and once (Tortola) with our four children as well, but more often alone, in trips of a week or less, to give my skin a hit to tide me over to April and my furtive return to the Ipswich dunes. San Juan was easiest to get to, but urban, with a drab, broad beach, and populated by irritable speakers of Spanish. The little islands had the black magic, and the shaggy curved coral beaches one could hide on.

St. Thomas was the most Americanized and accessible. In those days, there were no direct flights; you flew over from San Juan in little prop planes whose aisle tilted upward and whose black stewardesses gave you a piece of hard candy to ease the pain in your eustachian tubes. From on high, the water was turquoise, spotted with submerged islands, purplish coral reefs. I arrived at Harry S. Truman Airport, the first time, with no hotel reservation and the taxi took me to the Gate, a small hotel up a steep street near the center of Charlotte Amalie. It was in an old stone building with a big iron gate, curved brick stairs, and thick shutters; at night, downstairs, a steel band played and there was no sleeping until one o'clock. But then I never slept well in the Caribbean anyway, what with sunburn and my raw excitement at being there, at having reached the sun. The steel drums unleashed their belling, momentous music beneath my bed and a car with a broken muffler revved under my louvered window and I was roasting in a kind of heaven, happily hurting in every square inch of skin but what my bathing suit had covered that day. I had the treatment down to a science, after a few trips in which I had burned myself so badly as to lose the next day entirely, wasted, scorched and shivering, in my hotel room. On St. Thomas, I would take a taxi or drive my rented V.W. bug to Morningstar Beach or Magens Bay and walk, fully clothed, to the far end, stake out with my towel a spot near some sea grape or a shelter made of palm thatch, strip down to my bathing suit, and begin to pass the hours. Two hours was about the maximum, unless clouds muddled the exposure. If I had been there a few days and my skin was half cured, I might be bold enough to walk in my bathing suit down to the beach restaurant and have a hamburger and milk. I almost never talked to anyone, except to ask for food.

My solitude was part of the charm of those pilgrimages to the sun, part of the relief from my constant temperate-zone performances as father, partygoer, committeeman. Down here, my minor role as a leper became predominant, and I didn't want to be touched. My daily stint on the beach behind me, I would wander through the tax-free shops and the local forts with their torpid little displays of old muskets and leg irons. I would walk along the waterfront and marvel at the boats, evidences of that whole other life, full of ropes and cunning brass fittings, that men live at sea. I would wait for that quick tropical dusk, violet and green in color, to descend, so I could go to a bar—best of all, Trader Dan's, the open four-sided bar under a pavilion roof on the Charlotte Amalie harbor—and cool my insides with a Daiquiri or two. My chest and legs by now would be aching under my clothes, and it was as if with the rum I were rewarding myself for a good day's work.

Dinner was awkward, alone; on St. Thomas, I found a cafeteria a few blocks off the tourist track where the locals and I could eat meatloaf and peas off a tray. Then back to the Gate, to wait with a book in my room for the steel band to arrive, its clangorous unpacking and jocular jabber and the tentative peals of tuning up. I would go down and sit at the bar alone and drink beers and watch the dancing. In those days the Gate offered the only in-town entertainment; all the rest, the limbo dancers and calypso singers, was at the posh beach hotels, out of bounds to the natives who came and paid their dollar at the old iron gate, along with the white college kids and the more adventurous, louder middle-aged tourist couples. It was a black-and-white crowd, blacker as the night wore on, and the black girls were mesmerizing, doing the mambo with their understated, utterly certain motions, the feet shuffling back and forth a few inches, the hips swaying no more than necessary, the torso and head softly, steadily bobbing back and forth in a solemn chickenish kind of urging of the music, which rolled on and on, the soprano pan brighter and quicker than a marimba, and the bass—a pair of entire oil drums, usually played by the band's fat man—shaking the floor like an organ's "Amen."

I suppose I desired them, those stately rapt black girls, but, whatever my yearnings, the fact remains that I never had a sexual adventure in all those solitary trips to the Caribbean. *At last,* I can hear the reader sighing, *we're getting down to it.* For of course my concern with my skin was ultimately sexual, the skin being a sexual organ, and the moment of undressing the supreme revelation and confiding. Yet sexual contentment, whether that of the happily married or the illicitly adored, never reconciled me to my skin or relaxed my wish to improve it; my war had to do with self-love, with finding myself acceptable, whether others did or not.

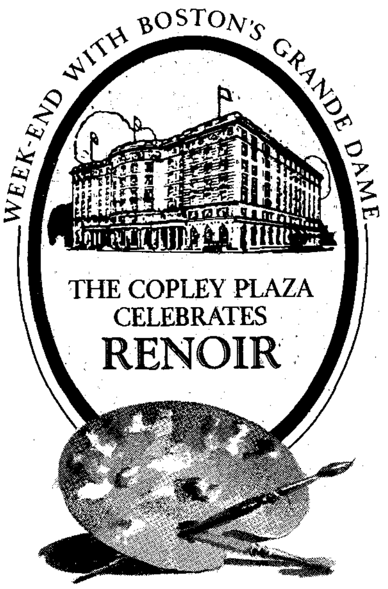
In the Caribbean, my sublimated drives found release in minor cross-cultural trespasses—the purchase of a pair of scissors, for instance, at a downtown sundries store where tourists rarely ventured (my own scissors, carried in my briefcase for some editing I wanted to do, were confiscated on the airplane as an anti-hijack measure and not returned), or afternoon walks up into the slopes of Charlotte Amalie where roosters crowed and tobacco-brown old ladies with toothless mouths lifted their hands in surprised greeting of this wrong-colored wanderer. In St. Thomas one Sunday, I discovered the Lutheran church not too many blocks up from the Gate, all polished wood and black faces inside, with plaques in Danish up near the rafters and in the pulpit a pale Englishman, a Greeneish-looking tropical cleric, gnawed by an inner worm. The old walls and pews still smelled of cedar, and the singing, like the steel band, like the sun, enfolded you entirely.

The trips gradually became less effective; some winters, there had to be two, one in December and one in March. In the fall of 1974, I left my wife and Ipswich. The next fall, perhaps because there had been no summer on the beach, perhaps because guilt had triggered a metabolic riot, my skin attacked me—my face broke out, my shoulders and neck became so encrusted I couldn't turn my head without pain. In the emergency I flew to St. Thomas and, though I arrived too late for the high sun, parked my rented car by a little beach near the airport and lay there, as a Catholic in crisis might nip into a cathedral. The good old sensations—the pressure of the rays, the slap and hiss of the water, the rustle of the palms, the yielding abrasion of the sand, the illusion, when the eyelids close, of being encased in a forgiving red—were the same, but my skin failed to react as it once did, with the sunburn that put all the cells, somehow, back to Go. Perhaps I had grown too soft on my skin, using too much Coppertone; or perhaps my skin had grown tougher. In the next days, the sleepy long curve of Magens Bay was as idyllic as ever, and the translucent water as alive with silverfish, and the sands of Morningstar (a big new hotel had been erected since I had first gone there) still held well-oiled male couples wearing European-skimpy trunks, and the smells of rum and charbroiled burgers drifted out from the bar as they always had, and the black taxi-drivers cracked jokes in the dusty parking lot; but my psoriasis balked at fading away, though the skin between the spots got freckled and tan. I had used up the Caribbean. At forty-two, I had worn out the sun.

PROVIDENTIALLY (let's say), at this very time, a few blocks from where I was living in Boston, dermatologists at Massachusetts General Hospital were developing the PUVA program, still in the experimental stage. I heard word of it, applied, and was accepted, mostly, it turned out, because my son David had once taken guitar lessons from the chief dermatologist's son. The doctor directly in charge was an Australian, and his letter offering me an appointment had the clipped, minimal elegance, centered on a large sheet of paper, of advisements from the British revenue service. Those admitted to the program had to be severe cases; from the startled expression on the doctor's face when I took off my shirt, I knew that I had passed. I would not flunk this enlistment. I stripped and, fussily clucking and clicking, he photographed my lesions with a Nikon. It was draft exam and swimming lessons and gym exhibition all over again; but I was nearing the end, I felt, of a long line of humiliating exposures. And in a few months pills and artificial light had done what salt water and sun could no longer do. I was "clear"—the clearest I had been since the age of six, or three.

On Anguilla, Daisy's young cousin, who was intellectual and had hopes of studying abroad, had once been speaking to me and cause had arisen to refer to some third party who was white. "He is—clear?" had been his delicate island way of putting it. White is right, clear is dear; I could now at long last abandon all imaginary solidarity with the unclear of the world. And yet, my timid ego wondered, was not my sly strength, my insistent specialness, somehow linked to my psoriasis? Might it not be the horrible badge of whatever in me was worth honoring: the price, high but not impossibly so, I must pay for being me?

What was my creativity, my relentless need to *produce*, but a parody of my skin's embarrassing overproduction? Was not my thick literary skin,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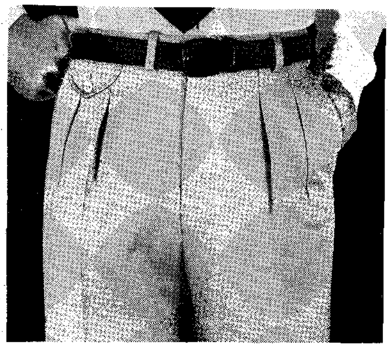

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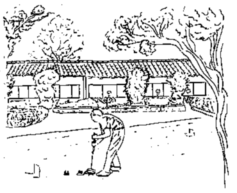

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which shrugged off rejection slips and patronizing reviews by the sheaf, a superior version of my poor vulnerable own, and my shamelessness on the page a distraction from my real shame, my skin? I have never cared, in print, about niceness or modesty, but abhor typos and factual errors—spots on the ideally unflecked text. Having always carried a secret behind my clothes, I had no trouble with the duplicity that generates plots and surprises and symbolism and layers of meaning. Dualism, indeed, such as existed between my skin and myself, instinctively struck me as the very engine of the human.

A psychiatrist, I happen to know, would be bored by these linkages; by Freudian lights my mother's failings (if any) matter far more than my skin's. In certain moods even I could put my narcissism in perspective. My eyes saw keenly, my legs moved briskly, my genital equipment worked well enough; I was in no serious way handicapped. Regarding those people who are, I feel a certain terror and an impatience; I show small talent for leading the blind and amusing the wheelchair-bound. I have worried that concern with my psoriasis has made me hard-hearted and deadened those feelers that sentimentally interact with the rest of mankind. Away from the mirror, I am hard to distress, and uncannily equable. I have been since early childhood caged with my fierce red skin, and all struggles outside the cage—that is to say, the general run of human travails—are relatively a relief. When I broke my leg and had to have it operated upon, I chiefly remember being pleased that my shins, in that season, were clear and I would not offend the surgeon.

With my admission to the PUVA program, I was no longer alone with my skin. The world's dermatological wisdom had come into the cage with me. In the years since, I have watched my skin fight back. The psoriasis irrepressibly strains against the treatment, breaking out in odd areas like the tops of the feet, the backs of the hands. To my body in its eccentric chemistry psoriasis is normal, and its suppression abnormal. Psoriasis is my health. Its suppression constitutes a poisoning of the system, of my personal ecology. Not only is my skin, after years of being battered by sunlight, full of keratotic and potentially cancerous cells but there is such a thing, it turns out, as phototoxicity, which builds up over the years of PUVA, and when it strikes

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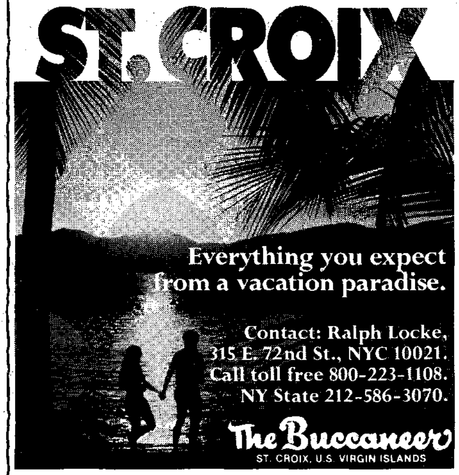

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feels like sunburn of the muscles, and chews the skin beneath the epidermis so that it flakes off in little chunks. I watch these developments with a certain detachment, at the distance of shared responsibility. I fear that science has done its best for the length of my lifetime; the little programming error at the root of the disease, like that at the root of arthritis, is too fine for today's tools. I also fear that when I weaken, when I am at last too ill to go stand in a box of glowing tubes, the psoriasis like a fire smoldering in damp peat will break out and spread triumphantly; in my dying I will become hideous, I will become what I am.

In the meantime, one struggles for philosophy, for thoughts that are more than skin deep. What could matter less than the integument a skeleton once wore? I have had my fun, my children and women and volleyball games. What vain concupiscence it used to be, playing volleyball bare-chested, leaping high to spike the ball down into a pretty housewife's upturned face, and wearing tomato-red bicycle shorts that as if casually slid down to expose an inch more of tanned, normal-appearing bottom, even to the sexy dent where the cleavage of the buttocks begins. I have preened, I have lived. Between now and the grave lies a long slide of forestallment, a slew of dutiful, dutifully paid-for maintenance routines in which PUVA joins periodontal work and prostate examinations on the crowded appointment calendar of dwindling days. For the first time in my life I own a house within walking distance of a beach, and I walk there scarcely three times a summer. Life suddenly seems too short to waste time lying in the sun.

—JOHN UPDIKE

•

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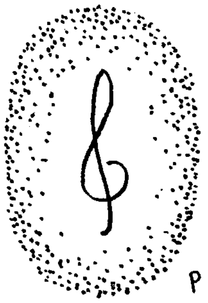
MUSICAL EVENTS

Melodious Cats

“The English Cat” is the fifth of Hans Werner Henze’s operas to be given its American première by the Santa Fe Opera. (The others were “Boulevard Solitude,” “The Stag King,” “The Bassarids,” and “We Come to the River.”) “The English Cat” was some four years in the making. In November, 1977, in Paris, Henze saw the Argentine theatre troupe TSE play a dramatization, by Geneviève Serrault, of Balzac’s epistolary tale “Heartaches of an English Cat”—his contribution to Grandville’s “Scenes from the Private and Public Life of Animals.” (Grandville’s images of men and women with animal heads have become newly familiar with their appearance in the columns of the *New York Review*.) The composer was struck with the operatic possibilities of the subject. In April, 1978, he invited the playwright Edward Bond, his collaborator on “We Come to the River,” to undertake a libretto:



> What fascinates me is the idea of masks. The story of a country cat married to a rich city cat too old to have fun, then her secret love affair on the London rooftops, and then the intrigue: the officer (a fox), whom she rejects, organizes the assassination of her lover, which is declared a suicide, just as in *Ballo in Maschera* or *Rigoletto*—all this smacks of today. These elements alone are so stimulating that already I *hear* everything. It may seem a shade arty, but it isn’t. . . .
>
> I need your arias and duets and recitatives (for dialogue) just as Verdi and Rossini needed their librettists’ texts, and with your help my music will become aggressive and alarming beneath its mask of stylization. It will upset all the usual readings that people think they find in the old work. Everything seems to be sweet and charming, and then it is suddenly grim and really terrifying.

Bond produced a schema, on two typewritten pages, in March, 1979, in London, on a day of biting cold. A libretto, sent by unregistered mail, reached Henze in Italy in the early days of June. Composition began in March, 1980. The opera had its first performance at the Schwetzingen Festival in June, 1983, in a German translation. A Paris production, in French, followed in February, 1984, at the Opéra-Comique. Last month, Santa Fe gave the original-language première of the work.

Meanwhile, Henze kept a working diary, and his “Die Englische Katze: Ein Arbeitstagebuch, 1978-1982,” a four-hundred-page volume published in 1983 by S. Fischer, provides a fascinating and detailed account of the score’s genesis. The opera was composed in rapid, exuberant bursts. One marvels at entries for the days on which, after filling many pages with music, Henze had energy left to set down analytical accounts of what he had been doing. The principal cat-music note row receives a move-by-move harmonic and emotional description. (The row is “*Affekt*-laden, like the intervallic system of a keyboard sonata by C. P. E. Bach or Haydn in the emotional vein, but also mysterious and protean, like the inner life of animals;” and Henze cites a line of Hölderlin about animal souls dwelling in men.) The derivation of later movements from the lusty street song of Arnold, the raffish nephew of Lord Puff, the elderly husband, is carefully traced. Thoughts about orchestration are set down as they occur: Tom, the hero of the piece, will have two clarinets, about which Henze, while writing for recorder in his children’s opera “Pollicino,” had “begun to dream as a thirsty man dreams of cool beer.” Minette, the heroine, will have a zither, and also harp, mandolin, and violin. Should the Royal Society for the Protection of Rats be represented by the piano? “Animal sounds must *not* be imitated, that would be false, but one can try to suggest the fabulous rustle and ripple of fur, the mystery and enigma of animals. Also, what we find funny about them, and they about us. But the arias and ensembles need more substantial material, melodies! And clear rhythmic and harmonic relationships. We’ll see.” The diary also includes summary accounts of the busy composer’s moves and meetings, of concerts heard, of work on other pieces (“Barcarola,” the new scoring of Monteverdi’s “Ulisse,” “Miracle of the Rose,” “La Tempesta”); some reflections on life and art; correspondence between Henze and Bond; and, in facsimile, much annotated, the working draft of the libretto. It is a document of high interest. There is a good deal in print by and about Henze: the diary he kept while composing the ballet “Ondine,” small volumes on “Der Prinz von Homburg” and “El Cimarrón,” a source book for the ballet “Orpheus,” volumes of collected essays (one is available in English translation, published by Cornell). The “English Cat” diary is the fullest and frankest of the series: an extended invitation to visit the composer’s workshop and observe the workings of his musical mind.

The opera, in two fairly long acts, is cast in the form of forty-one musical numbers, some of them instrumental interludes. At least twelve singers are needed; Santa Fe used fifteen, assigning separate singers to some of the roles Henze suggests may be doubled. There are six principals: Minette (high soprano), her sister Babette (mezzo), Lord Puff (tenor), Arnold (bass), Tom (lyric baritone), and Louise (soprano), a mouse the R.S.P.R. has adopted. There is much variety of texture, of form, of instrumental color, and of vocal forces. “Neoclassical” is the aptest catchall epithet for the style, and Hindemith is the composer most often suggested, both by the busy non-consonant counterpoints and by episodes of fluent but hardly memorable melody. The score is thoroughly and attractively composed. But I can’t share Henze’s enthusiasm for the dramatic fable. It seems to me uninteresting, arbitrary and unconvincing in its progress, largely pointless. Also heavy in its humor and confusing in its presentations of political argument. (I don’t usually think this of Bond, whose humane, exciting, disciplined plays I admire with what some deem extravagance.) In a 1979 letter, Bond wrote, “The play is partly about good luck, chance, hope, charity, opportunism—as opposed to understanding what you are doing and not relying on fortune or accidents (fascism v. socialism).” The “moral” is presumably the one Tom proclaims when he comes to the footlights and sings:

While rats depend on cats
There is no hope for rats
Only when rat helps rat
Will rats be free
Till then cats feed on rats
And call it charity.

Tom, a buoyant and resourceful alley cat, down on his luck, is discovered to be Lord Fairport, lost in infancy, and now “the wealthiest man in England.” The members of the R.S.P.R. murder him for his money. The last word is left with Louise, the mouse:

"O Tom—they have killed him! And he was the best of them! I see they cannot be trusted! One day when they are hungry they will eat me! . . . I have lived with cats and studied their ways!" She steals the contents of the R.S.P.R. collection box, and sings:

I have become a mouse again
I'll steal the milk and rob the grain
My teeth are sharp and I can bite
I'll give the ladies such a fright
They'll stand upon their chairs and yell
I'll be a little fiend from hell
Screech! Screech!

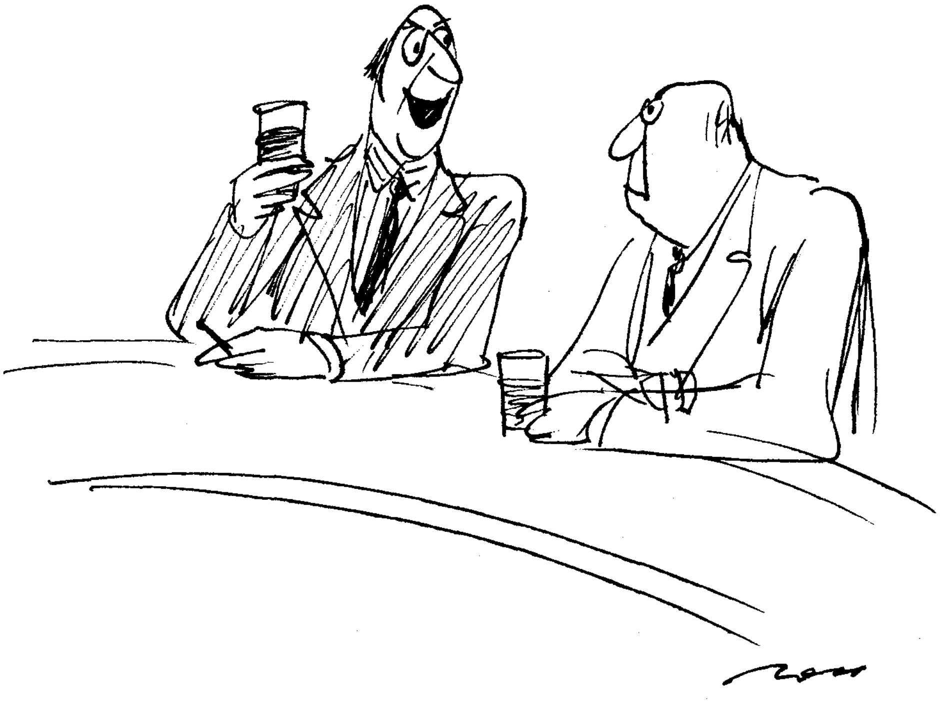
Well! It may be that in a production more astutely focussed than the very mild one Charles Ludlam presented in Santa Fe "The English Cat" will seem less feeble from a dramatic point of view. (The Manhattan School is planning a production in the spring.) It may be that when one can hear the words—few of them were audible in Santa Fe—it will prove more interesting in the theatre. As it was, one watched a cute, charming animal charade while listening to some elegantly wrought music. The strongest performance came from Kurt Link, a vividly feline Arnold. He alone had claws. Inga Nielsen (Minette), Lisa Turetsky (Babette), Kathryn Gamberoni (Louise), Michael Myers (Lord Puff), and Scott Reeve (Tom) weren't bad, but the characterizations lacked precision. Nothing was alarming, suddenly grim, or really terrifying. Steven Rubin's animal costumes were fine; his settings were ugly and ill-proportioned. George Manahan's conducting was neat, respectful, and unadventurous.

RICHARD STRAUSS is another composer regularly honored in Santa Fe: nine of his operas have been done there. This year, the 1982 production of "Die Liebe der Danae" was revived. It is Strauss's glowing, gorgeous farewell to the world of not unfruitful, not unrewarding illusion and metaphor in which an opera composer spends his life—a work wise, warm, and beautiful. I've loved "Danae" since its first public performance, at the 1952 Salzburg Festival. The Santa Fe production is hideous to look at and bluntly staged. John Crosby was at best a pedestrian conductor, and the excellent Santa Fe orchestra, sunk in a deep pit, could not bloom in the open-air acoustics. Yet something came across. Ashley Putnam may not have the body and beauty of tone or the full, soaring lines that the title role requires (it's a role in which Leonie Rysanek excelled), but she is a sensitive and attractive artist. Dennis Bailey, the Midas, was a young-heroic tenor back on form—ardent, exact, compelling in all he did. Victor Braun took the immense role of Jupiter—his final monologue perhaps the longest in opera. Jupiter needs to be Hans Sachs and Wotan in one: Hans Hotter sang the role at the 1944 "dress-rehearsal" performance, given just before the German theatres were closed, and Paul Schöffler sang it in Salzburg. Braun was not ideal, but he was in fuller voice than he had been three years ago, and although by the end he was tiring there was emotion and eloquence in his performance.

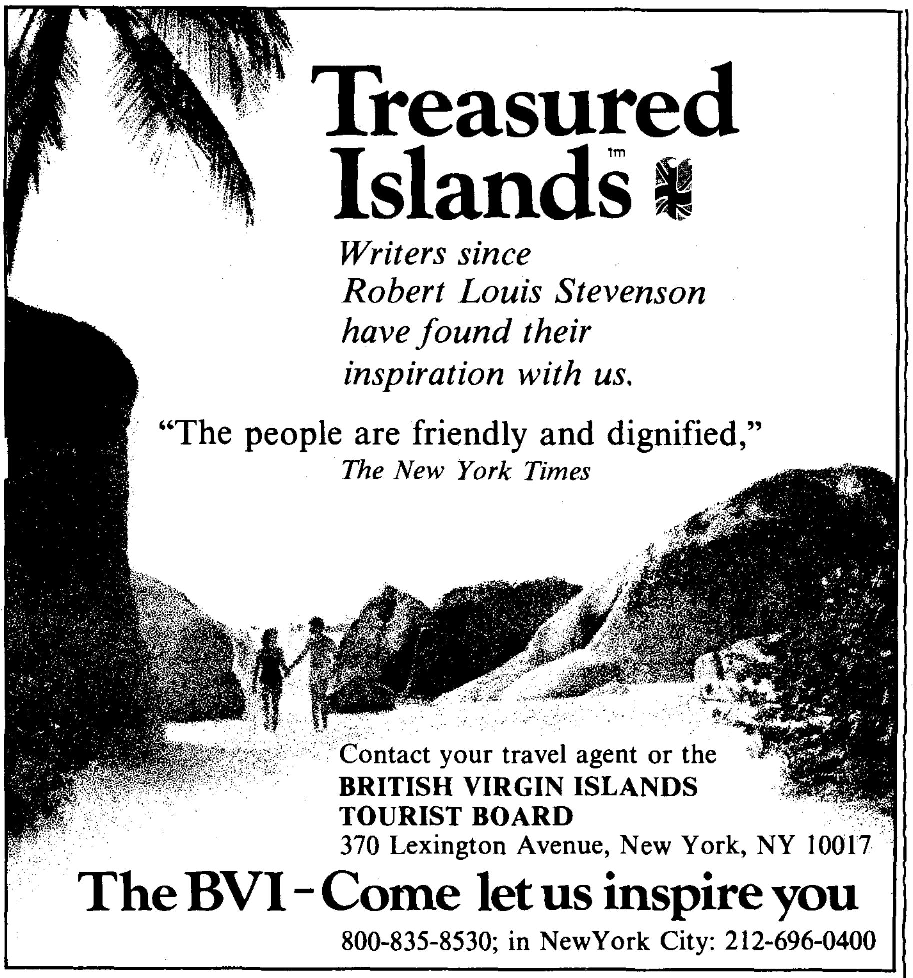
The other Santa Fe offerings were the première of John Eaton's "The Tempest" (a Shakespeare opera for which I fashioned the libretto), a new production of "The Marriage of Figaro," and a revival of "Orphée aux Enfers." The "Figaro," bluntly played in gaunt, ugly sets—bare to the point where Susanna had to use a lapboard to write her letter—was in most ways deplorable. Kevin Langan's polished Bartolo provided the only touch of distinction, and Ruth and Thomas Martin's resourceful English translation was clearly uttered. "Orphée"—sung in French, with Ann Howard, as Public Opinion, vivacious and ever-present as a translating commère—was a big, glitzy show, efficient in its rather low way. The version used treated Offenbach's score in cavalier fashion, and the plot almost disappeared.

"Land of Enchantment" is the legend on New Mexico car license plates, and at each visit to Santa Fe I've found the spell of the place unfading: days under immense skies, walking or riding amid piñon and juniper; evenings at the opera beneath moon and stars, with the noble mountain ranges as backdrop. (One soon forgets the nights when the thunder rolls, cold winds rake the theatre, and rain drowns the music.) The level of performance, as I've suggested above, varies. But always there's a sense of dedication, of seriousness, of caring about opera as something important—more than an entertainment for tired businessmen.

THE Lake George Opera Festival, another organization with a commitment to contemporary opera, this season presented what was billed as the première of Richard Wargo's "The Seduction of a Lady." (The piece had a workshop showing at the City Center last year, put on by the National Institute for Music Theatre, and has since then received a student production.) The libretto, by the composer, is based on Neil Simon's dramatization of a Chekhov short story. The opera is a light, beguiling piece for three singers (soprano, tenor, and baritone) and three players (violin, cello, and piano). Wargo sets words deftly and melodiously. His score is formally dapper and neatly composed, the jokes are trimly made. "The Seduction of a Lady" was played on a



"You are what you drink, and I drink only the best."



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double bill with another one-act, three-singer work after Chekhov—Dominick Argento's "The Boor," his first opera (1957). The high-spirited piece holds its own against William Walton's more flamboyant setting of the same matter, as "The Bear" (1967). The same three singers—Pamela South, Joseph Evans, and David Barron—played the Wargo and the Argento, and in both they were admirable. Words were clear, characterizations sharp-edged. Dorothy Danner, the director, has a happy touch with comedy; the shows were inventive and exuberant but never gross. Joseph De Rugeriis conducted the orchestra of "The Boor." James Morgan designed a slight set for the Wargo and a full, witty one for the Argento. The other festival works were Gounod's five-act grand opera "Romeo and Juliet," Donizetti's "Daughter of the Regiment," and—"showcase" productions for young singers—"The Beggar's Opera" (in the Britten version) and Tom Johnson's "The Four Note Opera."

The company plays not beside Lake George but in a school auditorium at Glens Falls, nearby. At Glens Falls—strictly speaking, on an island in the river between Glens Falls and South Glens Falls—is the most famous of all American literary sites: the Hudson cave so picturesquely described in "The Last of the Mohicans," wherein Cora, Uncas, Hawkeye, and their companions took refuge. Generations of readers—from Schubert onward—have dreamed of visiting this romantic place. Alas, it is inaccessible now except by fence climbing, trespass, and a scramble I found too daunting to venture on. Festival pilgrims must be content with a visit to another shrine—the great soprano Marcella Sembrich's memento-filled studio at Bolton Landing, beside the lake.

—ANDREW PORTER

•

NEATEST TRICK OF THE WEEK

[*From the Stroudsburg* (*Pa.*) *Pocono Record*]

BEFORE SENATE
STATE GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE
Senate Bill 1: To amend state law to enable police and firefighters to live outside the county in which they live.

•

CORRECTION
Because of an error on a map supplied by United Press International, the body of water off the east coast of Florida was misidentified in Saturday's Register. It is the Atlantic Ocean.—*New Haven Register.*

Noted.

LETTER FROM NEW DELHI

THE ring of the telephone in our hotel room here in New Delhi jolts me out of a deep sleep. I answer, only half awake.

"There is a fire in the hotel, and we need some information to plan an evacuation," a man's voice says in my ear.

"A fire? Where is it?" I ask.

"So far, it is confined to the basement, but all the elevators are shut down. What is your name? . . . How many are in the room? . . . Are there any children?"

I dutifully give the answers, telling the caller that I have with me my wife and our baby daughter.

"Is your wife wearing a nightie?"

"Why?"

"Is it of polyester? If so, please ask her to immediately change into a cotton nightie."

Even as I am talking on the phone, a waiter wheels in the breakfast that we had ordered the night before, and sets it up. My wife draws the curtains and says something about swimmers playing in the pool ten floors below.

"Wait a minute!" I say into the phone, sitting up. "If there's a fire, how can you be serving breakfast?"

"Please, get your wife to change her nightie immediately." There is a loud disconnect.

I am fully awake now, and I call the reception desk downstairs and ask about the fire and the strange call.

"Fire? There is no fire. It must be a telephone hoax."

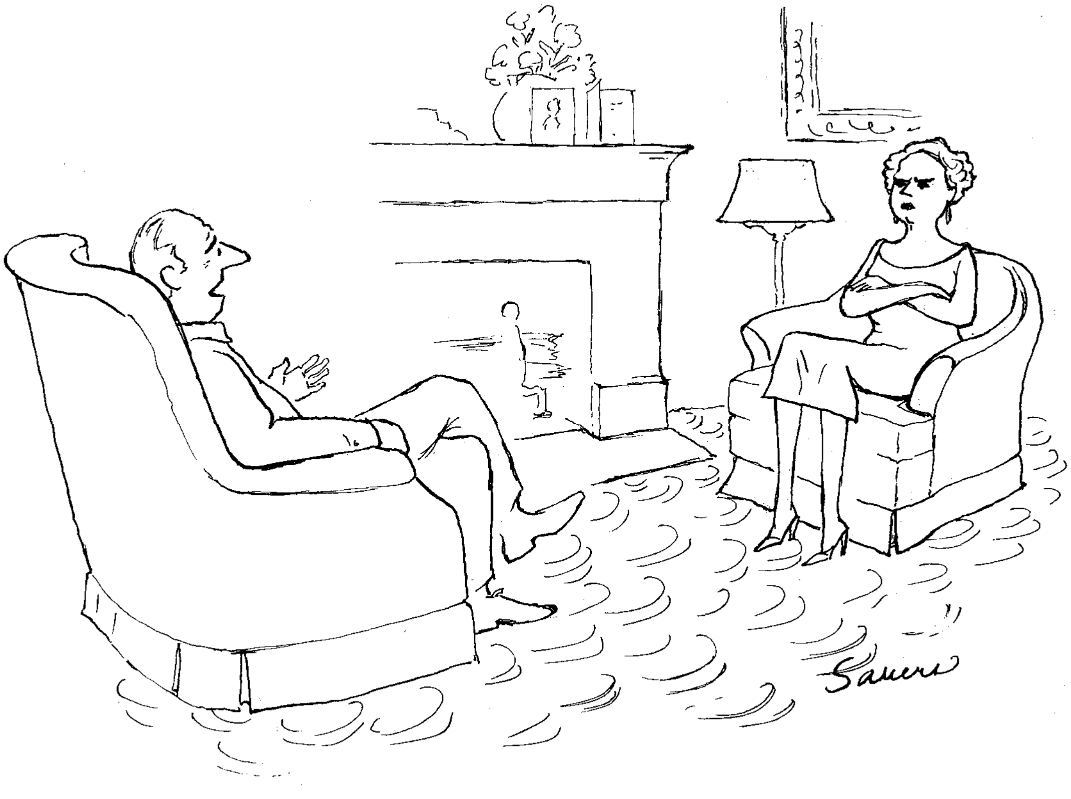
I know from my visits to India over the years that some kind of danger is always around the corner here. One minute, a back street will be as pacific as a mangy street cow eating from a dustbin in the sun, and the next minute a shouting mob will materialize, like the wasps one sees swarming around the hotel doors in the morning. Before one knows it, knives will be flashing and Molotov cocktails flying. I myself take seriously any warning of danger here, and I now ask the receptionist if hotel guests often receive alarmist telephone calls.

"I would not like to say, sir, please," the receptionist says.

For the rest of the morning, there are telephone calls and emissaries from the lobby manager's office, from hotel security, from the hotel's public-relations office, all bent upon assuring us that we are as safe in the hotel as we would be in our beds in America. The fuss is all out of proportion to its cause—the silly telephone call—but, then, I remind myself, the hotel has a vested interest in keeping its guests in ignorance of the dangers within and without: of the fact that we are in the capital of a smoldering country with the brushfires of factional strife starting up now in this city, now in that village. Our hotel is one of half a dozen five-star hotels in New Delhi, with perfect air-conditioning and good water pressure, modern plumbing and modern fixtures—the Western comforts out of the reach of almost all the people here. The hotels were built during Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's regime, to attract foreign tourists and foreign conventioneers, foreign exchange and foreign business, and they allow one to be in India without requiring one to cope with any of its realities. (One night in our hotel, without meals, is costing us a hundred dollars, or six months' wages for an average Indian. Ordinarily, I would feel too guilty to go near the place, but this time I am travelling with a small child, and anyway, even here, the water from the tap is not safe to drink.)

The day after the telephone hoax, I wake up to newspapers with these banner headlines: "NORTH INDIA ROCKED BY BOMB EXPLOSIONS" and "40 DIE IN BLASTS IN DELHI, U.P. & HARYANA." The front page of the *Times of India* carries, in bold type, this summary of the night of bombings: "Sikh terrorists struck in different cities and towns of Northern India today, leaving about 42 dead and more than 100 injured in a series of well-planned and organised bomb explosions in buses, trains, and crowded localities. The new feature of the renewed outbreak of terrorist activity is the planting of explosives in crowded buses in a bid to create a fear psychosis and immobilise people." Later reports raise the number of deaths to eighty, and state that many of the victims are children: one little Hindu boy finds a transistor radio in the street and takes it home, only to have it explode in his hands, killing him and his whole family.

THE Sikhs' struggle for some kind of autonomy—there seems to be no consensus among them on what they want—is being spoken of here by Sikhs, in characteristic hyperbole, as "the holy battle of the turban against the cap." Their turban, they say, is worn boldly over their Samsonlike un-



"I did not complain—I merely brought the matter to your attention."

shorn hair, while the cap covers the shaved skull of the Hindu. (In actuality, only some ascetic Hindus shave their heads. The rhetoric also ignores facts such as that some Hindus wear turbans every day and many Hindus wear them on ceremonial occasions, and that "taking his turban off" is an insulting expression among Sikhs and Hindus alike.) According to the Sikhs, the turban stands tall and majestic on top of their head, while the cap lies squat and common on the Hindu head. "How can a cap have dominion over the turban?" a young Sikh in New Delhi asks me. "When has the turban ever bowed to a cap? We must have our Khalistan"—a separate nation for the Sikhs. The English scholar Christopher Shackle, discussing the late Sikh extremist leader Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, who was perhaps the greatest advocate of Khalistan, writes, in a study of India's Sikh problem for the London-based Minority Rights Group, "In life, much of Bhindranwale's appeal lay in his power to articulate forcefully the easily invoked extreme solutions to minority status that might be reached by open fighting between the Sikh turban and the Hindu cap." He goes on to quote this passage from one of Bhindranwale's typically confusing speeches:

> It is a matter of keeping the unshorn hair, the beard, and the sword-belt. The Sikhs are a separate nation. Some say we are separate already. If so, then why say we are second-class citizens? That the Sikhs are historically separate even the cap-people have admitted. But if Bhindranwale proclaims this, they say that what he wants is Khalistan. We have endured enough slavery over the past thirty-six years. Now, no matter how many heads may roll, we must be free.

Seeing the conflict in terms of the turban and the cap may seem absurd. But history abounds with examples of people fighting for symbols, people laying waste whole kingdoms for the cross of the Christians or the crescent of Islam. The turban and the cap may only be latter-day Indian versions of the aristocratic curly locks of the Cavaliers and the plebeian short hair of the Roundheads in seventeenth-century England. Still, it boggles the mind to think that the survival of India as a united country may depend on the outcome of such a conflict of symbols.

Sikhs here are saying that Sikhism, "the religion of the turban," has an aggressive, masculine character, because it is monotheistic; they say contemptuously that, in contrast, Hinduism, "the religion of the cap," has a pacific, feminine character, because it is polytheistic. The Hindus I speak to reject the Sikhs' characterization of them indignantly but do grudgingly acknowledge that Sikhs are "a martial people" with "a martial history." Indeed, in some respects Sikh males do appear more "masculine" than their Hindu counterparts, perhaps because among the external marks of a Sikh male are a beard and mustache that are never cut, a steel bracelet, and a sabre worn at the side. And every Sikh has Singh, meaning "lion," as part of his name—usually as his surname. It was the citadel of the Sikhs' masculine, martial religion—the Golden Temple complex, in the Sikhs' holy city of Amritsar, in Punjab—that in June of 1984 Mrs. Gandhi had the Indian Army storm and seize, in an operation code-named Blue Star. More than a thousand Sikh extremists who had taken sanctuary in the temple, including Bhindranwale, died fighting the attackers; several sacred buildings sustained extensive damage.

I, for one, cannot underestimate the importance, somewhere deep in the Sikh mind, of the fact that it was a woman who sent troops into the Golden Temple. A woman not only dared to penetrate the Sikhs' sanctum sanctorum but, in the course of the assault, damaged it. She might as well have stamped on the Sikh turban, demoted the lion to the status of a goat. The humiliation was all the greater because she had a Sikh general, other Sikh officers, and Sikh soldiers take part in the attack. Since the storming of the temple, Sikh women have been taunting their menfolk with remarks like "The Hindus have taken the starch out of your mustache."

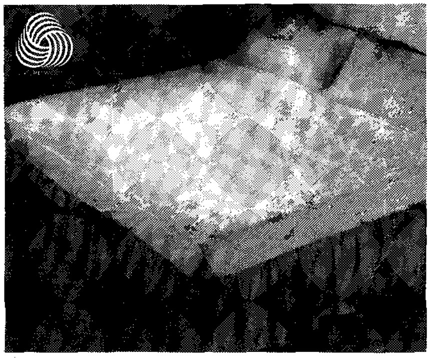
Though Mrs. Gandhi spent tens of millions of rupees restoring the damaged temple buildings and went to the Golden Temple to pray, she showed no remorse for Operation Blue Star. She claimed that the Sikhs themselves were responsible for the desecration of their temple, pointing to evidence that since August of 1982 Sikh extremists had been arming themselves and taking sanctuary not only in the Golden Temple but also in other Punjabi temples, and that Bhindranwale and his followers had turned the Golden Temple into a virtual military fortress and were using it to traffic illegally in arms, to carry out assassinations, to create conditions that made Punjab ungovernable for her. She said that the Sikh extremists were no different from the Naga, the Mizo, and other tribal groups who, over the years, had been waging guerrilla warfare in the jungles and mountains of northeastern India. She even excoriated moderate Sikhs for not dissociating themselves from Sikh extremists—for not putting their own house in order and thus obviating the need for her military action.

Moderate Sikhs, for their part, say that the fundamentalist movement in Punjab was so strong that for them to have spoken out against it would have been to commit political suicide. They point to the fundamentalist movement sweeping through Islamic countries—Iran in particular—and ask which Iranian Muslim was able to stand up to Ayatollah Khomeini and his zealots and live. They say that Operation Blue Star has made them even more helpless than they were before. They maintain that Mrs. Gandhi could have achieved her aim of flushing the extremists from the Golden Temple by means other than military force—by cutting off the water supply and the electricity, by choking off supplies of fuel and food. Such measures might have taken several months to work, and perhaps risked a more general Sikh rebellion in Punjab—the Sikh masses there venerated as saints the Sikh leaders whom the government branded terrorists and murderers—but moderate Sikhs insist that in this way she would have respected the sanctity of the temple and not given offense to the honor and dignity of the Sikh male. As it was, she made Bhindranwale—at best a mad monk—into a martyr and a hero, and alienated practically all Sikhs, including many Army officers and soldiers. (After Operation Blue Star, there were widespread desertions and mutinies of Sikhs in the Army, and these, it is being said, tarnished the integrity of the one institution in independent India that had remained beyond reproach.)

But Mrs. Gandhi knew as well as anyone that victory in the battle for the Golden Temple would be Pyrrhic. Sikhs were famous for their long-running vendettas. They would not rest until they had avenged the desecration of the temple; some of them would regard it as their religious duty to take her life. By contrast, she, in her dealings with Sikhs, would be under all kinds of constraints. She couldn't even give the appearance of discriminating against a Sikh in the Army or the police—or, indeed, in the ranks of her own bodyguard—since the rationale for her military action was that Sikh extremists were undermining the secular state and setting religion against religion.

There has been much speculation here about why Mrs. Gandhi acted in a way that made her assassination at the hands of a Sikh almost a foregone conclusion. Even as she decided on her action, she must have heard the echoes of the murder in the cathedral—the murder of Thomas à Becket by the henchmen of Henry II—which had resonated in Western literature for eight centuries; she had probably read T. S. Eliot's play about the murder and perhaps seen the film based on Jean Anouilh's play. People here who saw her regularly in recent years say that after the death of her son Sanjay, in 1980, she seemed to lose her zest for living. At the time of Operation Blue Star, she was sixty-six. She had led the country for nearly sixteen years, all told; during most of those years she had got bad press, and she talked as if she were bruised and tired. She stood on the brink of a general election for which all the portents were against her. People say that, having arranged for her surviving child, Rajiv, to succeed her, she might well have decided, in some part of her mind, that it was time to pass the torch.

AFTER Mrs. Gandhi's assassination by two of her Sikh bodyguards, on October 31, 1984, Hindus in New Delhi and elsewhere in the country went on a rampage, beating up and killing Sikhs and burning Sikh houses, shops, and vehicles. In the anti-Sikh rioting, which raged for four days and nights, at least twenty-seven hundred Sikhs are thought to have been killed and thousands left homeless. It was one of the worst outbreaks of communal violence since the Partition, in 1947, and gave the impression that the machinery of law and order had broken down completely and the government had lost control. At first, it was thought that the violence was spontaneous and stemmed from Hindus' grief and anguish at the death of their Prime Minister. But several citizens' groups subsequently looked into the pattern of the violence and concluded that except for a few burnings of Sikh vehicles and the manhandling of some Sikhs in the neighborhood of the hospital to which the wounded Mrs. Gandhi was rushed the violence was probably politically inspired. According to these citizens' groups, some leaders of the ruling Congress Indira Party made anonymous telephone calls and spread false rumors in New Delhi: Sikhs have poisoned the city's water supply, Sikhs have killed all the Hindu passengers on the train from Punjab, Sikh marauders are killing Hindus in the city. Some of the politicians, the groups say, trucked in professional hooligans from outlying villages and assembled mobs, and then, using voters' lists, pointed out Sikh houses for burning. It seems that Congress Indira leaders, after anointing Rajiv as Mrs. Gandhi's successor within hours of her death, decided that only a quick general election could give political legitimacy to what was essentially a dynastic succession. Rajiv shared this view, and immediately advanced by a month the date of the general election scheduled for late January, 1985—an action that insured that he would be the beneficiary not only of the sympathy vote but also of the anti-Sikh vote. The Congress Indira leaders felt that if they created an atmosphere of Hindu solidarity they could capture the right-wing Hindu vote, which generally went to the opposition parties. The lesser Congress Indira politicians, sensing this strategy, apparently arranged for the anti-Sikh riots, to help Rajiv win and, at the same time, to teach the Sikhs a lesson. (A member of Parliament who supposedly instigated the anti-Sikh violence, Lalit Maken, was gunned down this July with his wife in front of their house in New Delhi. At the time of this writing, the identity of their murderers is not known.) Newspapers, discussing the reports of the



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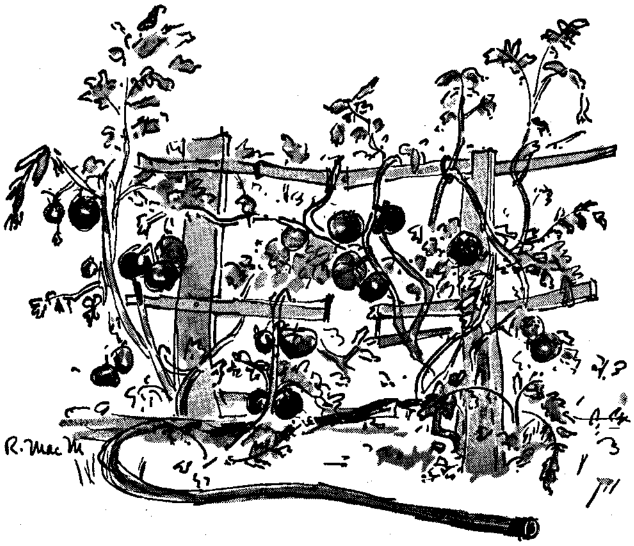
citizens' groups, have dwelt on the fact that Rajiv campaigned as if the threat of Sikh secession were the only issue before the country, and thus succeeded in routing the opposition and getting the right-wing Hindu vote, with the result that he chalked up a victory greater than any his mother ever won.

After the election, however, Rajiv did an about-face. He tried to distance himself from his mother's policies against the Sikh extremists—indeed, from his own campaign pronouncements—and went to great lengths to clear the air of communal suspicion and hostility. He let it be known, almost from the beginning of his Prime Ministership, that he was open to any compromise solution to the Sikh problem as long as it did not threaten the integrity and unity of the country. He released Sikh leaders and Sikh extremists who were summarily arrested during the last months of his mother's regime, when Punjab was placed under martial law. And he went as far as to initiate an official investigation into the anti-Sikh riots, even though it was probably his ox that would be gored. Above all, he called an election in Punjab for late in September.

Many observers here think that the Prime Ministership of Rajiv Gandhi will ultimately either fly or flounder on the basis of how he is able to solve the Sikh problem. The solution to that problem, however, may rest not so much with him as with the Sikhs themselves. The riots gave the Sikhs the scare of their lives, and have made them distrustful of Hindus and distrustful of living in India. Sikhs here have the look of hunted animals. The Sikh doormen who used to adorn the entrances of hotels and offices in New Delhi as proudly as if they were the gatekeepers of the country now skulk around wearing bitter, wounded expressions. If one engages them in conversation about Mrs. Gandhi or Rajiv, they are apt to say things like "Sikh arms and legs are swelling up with poison."

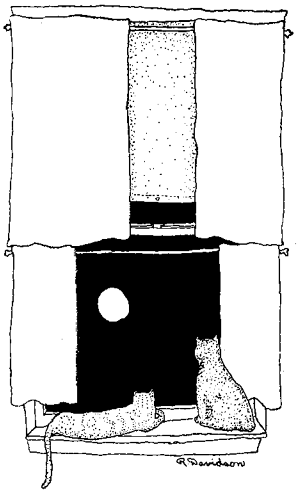
PEOPLE here say that nowadays the extremist Sikhs are busy inventing legend and calling it history, and then acting on it as if they were being propelled by something real rather than something imagined. For instance, the extremists speak about Operation Blue Star as "the biggest blow struck against the Sikh nation," as if Mrs. Gandhi's sacrilege were the worst insult in Sikh history. Actually, that history includes examples of worse insults. In the eighteenth century, the Afghans twice blew up the Golden Temple, and in one battle killed twenty thousand Sikhs, in an attempt to crush Sikhism and Sikh military power. The extremists, with their propaganda of "the biggest blow," have so stirred up the Sikh masses that Sikh leaders have been reluctant to parley with Rajiv for fear that their support would melt away like a cake of ghi in the sun. Again, the extremists refer to the government in New Delhi as the Delhi throne, as if the democratically elected Indian government were another Mogul or British imperium. Sikhs are famous for their wars against the Moguls and the British, and they have apparently convinced themselves that they are now fighting a similar war against the Indian government. Again, they say that Hindus have always been untrustworthy, pointing to the case of the Brahmin cook who in Mogul times supposedly betrayed the sons of one of their gurus to the Muslims. (The Gandhi family is Brahmin.) And so they have taken to murdering Hindus. In fact, they talk about "the Sikh religion" and "Sikh interests" as if these had always been in opposition to the religion and the interests of the Hindus, forgetting that the founder of Sikhism, Guru Nanak (1469-1539), was a Hindu, that their nine subsequent gurus were all Hindus, that all the gurus belonged to the same Hindu warrior caste, that all the early Sikhs were originally Hindus, and that, historically, Sikhs were the protectors of Hindus—their "sword arm." The tradition of Sikhs' being the protectors was so strong that Punjabi Hindus often brought up their eldest son as a Sikh, and changed his surname to Singh. In the past, Sikhs and Hindus were so close that intermarriages between the two communities were common, and the Sikh scriptures were treated as part of the body of the sacred writings of the Hindus.



In all of India, there are only fourteen million Sikhs, and among India's religious minorities they make up only one and nine-tenths per cent of the population, whereas Christians constitute two and six-tenths per cent and Muslims eleven per cent. But, unlike Christians, Muslims, or any of the other minorities, Sikhs are at the center of Indian politics and business. The President of India, Zail Singh, is a Sikh. Some of the most prosperous people in the big cities are Sikhs. Eighty per cent of the Sikhs are concentrated in Punjab, and the state, which is India's breadbasket and the home of its "green revolution," supplies food to many poorer states. (Some say that a Sikh threat to block the transport of food from Punjab to other states was what finally goaded Mrs. Gandhi into attacking the Golden Temple.) Moreover, Punjab is strategically situated—between New Delhi and Pakistan, India's greatest enemy, and between New Delhi and the state of Jammu and Kashmir, over which India and Pakistan have already fought two wars. The Sikhs' holy city of Amritsar is near what has turned out to be the quite porous border with Pakistan. Sikhs have been able to smuggle in arms from Pakistan, and possibly even receive training in guerrilla tactics there, thus "destabilizing the Indian government," as officials here put it.

In a sense, the Sikhs' quest for political power in independent India has its roots in the Muslim quest for political power in British India, which in 1947 resulted in the Partition and the creation of Pakistan. It was at that time that some Sikhs first raised the cry for Khalistan (the name means "a pure place for Sikhs"), as if to say that since the Muslims had got Pakistan ("a pure place for Muslims"), the Sikhs deserved no less. But most people, including the Sikh community as a whole, treated the cry only as a protest against the Partition and the accompanying riots, which left tens of thousands of Sikhs dead and many times that number refugees. (Sikhs, of course, shared this fate with Hindus.) In any event, Muslims in pre-Partition India numbered in the tens of millions, and Islam was a recognized world religion, whereas Sikhs were members of a much smaller minority and Sikhism had for centuries been regarded as a "sect" of Hinduism. Then, in 1956, the Indian government, trying to deal with chauvinist linguistic minorities, divided up some states to create new ones for some of the major linguistic groups. But no state was created for the Sikhs, because their language, Punjabi, was spoken by two or three times as many Hindus. The Sikhs began agitating for a state of their own, and in 1966 Mrs. Gandhi's government divided the state of East Punjab into two states: Punjab, where Sikhs were predominant, and Haryana, where Hindus were predominant. The two states, however, were forced to share the capital city of Chandigarh, designed in the late nineteen-forties by Le Corbusier. (Chandigarh had been built, at great expense, because Lahore, the capital of the old British province of the Punjab, had gone, with West Punjab, to Pakistan.) The Sikhs wanted to have Chandigarh to themselves, and, in addition, they complained that some of the towns and districts given to Haryana should have been awarded to them. They were also unhappy about the formula for sharing the waters of the Ravi and Beas Rivers with Haryana and the neighboring state of Rajasthan; they wanted more of the water for the irrigation of their own state. The government contended that the Sikhs were too few to justify its giving them what they wanted, and that the Sikhs would have ended up being a minority if the new state of Punjab had been awarded more territory, for, as it was, they had a bare majority there.

Even after the Sikhs got their state, they were seldom able to form Sikh state governments or to send a bloc of Sikh representatives to the Parliament, in New Delhi, because, as it turned out, Sikhs did not automatically vote for candidates of the Akali Dal, the Sikh party. Different Sikh caste groups in Punjab had different political interests: the Khatris were businessmen in the towns; the Jats were independent farmers in the villages; the Majhabis were landless laborers with the status of Untouchables. (Although in theory Sikhism does not recognize caste, in practice Sikhs retain the castes of their Hindu ancestors.) Today, the Khatris constitute about ten per cent of the Sikh population in Punjab, the Jats about fifty-five per cent, and the Majhabis about thirty-five per cent. The Akali Dal could rely only on the support of the Jats, a fiery, orthodox people—Bhindranwale was a Jat, and they have been the backbone of the extremist movement—with the result that it often had to form coalition governments in the state with the Congress Indira or the Jana Sangh, a right-wing Hindu party.



In 1972, the Akali Dal appointed a committee of Sikhs, representing the many shades of opinion within the Party, to examine the causes of Sikh political failure and to redefine the Party's policies and program and, by extension, the demands that Sikhs should make of the central government. In October of 1973, this committee presented its report to the Party in the town of Anandpur Sahib, the ancestral home of Gobind Singh (1666-1708), the tenth, and last, guru, who militarized the faith and built a series of fortresses with the town at the center. After some discussion, the report was adopted, and came to be known as the first Anandpur Sahib resolution. Nothing came of its demands. In 1977, the Party met in the town of Ludhiana, passed another resolution, and called it the second Anandpur Sahib resolution. The two resolutions seemed to overlap. The second repeated and amplified the tenets of the first, but because the Akali Dal happened to be riding high in 1977, thanks to the Janata Party's defeat of Mrs. Gandhi at the polls after the Emergency, the second resolution was more moderate in tone. In 1980, however, the Congress Indira defeated the Janata Party, and Mrs. Gandhi was returned by a big majority. It was after this that Sikh politics took an extremist turn. The Akali Dal called for immediate implementation of the Anandpur Sahib resolutions, and Bhindranwale started using terrorist means to get the government to capitulate. At the same time, he appealed to the fundamentalist side of the Sikh faith, which made it difficult for Sikh moderates to stand up to him. When the government tried to arrest him, he took refuge in the Golden Temple and carried on his campaign from there. Mrs. Gandhi followed the same policy with the extremist Sikhs which had proved successful in keeping other restive minorities in check: she put the state under direct New Delhi rule (something that the Constitution allows the central government to do when law and order break down in a state), and engaged in a combination of ruthless military suppression and endless political negotiation, calculated to divide her opposition and wear it down.

The Anandpur Sahib resolutions have all along been the touchstone of Sikh politics, but they were written in Punjabi, a minor regional language, in the little-known Gurmukhi script, and for years were scarcely known outside councils of the Akali Dal. Few literate Sikhs had read them, and most unlettered Sikhs knew about them only through slogans and by hearsay. The first English translation was not available until 1981, and it was a bowdlerized and much-shortened version. I read Punjabi, but I have not been able to get hold of the original texts—no one I have spoken to here has ever set eyes on them. Since 1980, the resolutions have been constantly referred to and invoked in crucial negotiations, but various Sikh leaders have been using various versions, rather than a single authorized text.

There are at least two working versions: an extremist version, issued by the extremist Sikh leader Jagdev Singh Talwandi around 1981, and a so-called authenticated version, issued in 1983 by the late Harchand Singh Longowal, the temperate president of the Akali Dal. Both denounce the Hindus in Punjab, who support the Congress Indira or the Jana Sangh. Sometimes they seem to say that in respect to Punjab the central government should have responsibility only for defense, external affairs, currency, and general communications, and in all other areas Punjab should have complete authority, as if the Sikhs were demanding a special kind of relationship with the Indian Union; at other times they seem to say that all states should enjoy the rights they

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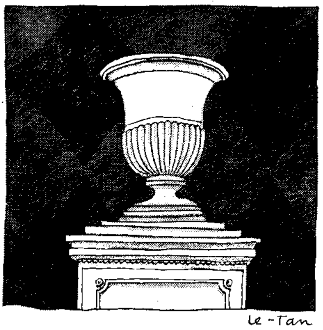
want for Punjab, as if they were asking for a total overhaul of the federal structure and the Indian Constitution. Perhaps because the drafters wanted to avoid treasonous language, and also because the resolutions they hammered out were compromises, the various demands and assertions are vague; neither of them, for instance, makes any direct reference to secession or to Khalistan. But the Talwandi version maintains that "the brute majority in India, in 1950, has imposed a constitutional arrangement in India which denudes the Sikhs of their political identity, and subordinates them as a cultural particularity, thus liquidating the Sikhs politically and exposing them to spiritual death and cultural decay." It demands that "an autonomous region in the north of India should be set up forthwith wherein the Sikhs' interests are constitutionally recognized as of primary and special importance," adding that "the Sikh autonomous region may be conceded and declared as entitled to frame its own constitution on the basis of having all powers to and from itself except foreign relations, defense, and general communication." Longowal's "authenticated version" makes no reference to "liquidating the Sikhs politically" or to the setting up of an "autonomous region" or to that region's having a right "to frame its own constitution." It calls for the creation of a new, expanded Punjab for the Sikhs, which would include not only Chandigarh but all the disputed areas excluded from the present state of Punjab. In this new, expanded Punjab, the Akali Dal would extirpate atheism and "un-Sikh thinking" and propagate the Sikh way of life. It also calls for the religious and political preëminence of the Khalsa (the community of pure Sikhs) in a new, expanded Punjab, and a "congenial environment and a political setup" to bring it about. The exact words of the various texts are of little consequence now. In rallying the Sikh masses, what matters is the cry "The Anandpur Sahib resolutions!" This was the cry of "the martyred Bhindranwale," and any Sikh leader who mutes this cry is liable to be pushed aside in favor of a leader who is more shrill.



Yet on July 24th Longowal, in what was seen by political observers here as an act of personal courage, reached an agreement with Rajiv and his Cabinet, after thirty-three hours of continuous talks. (Ironically, the agreement was essentially the same as the one proposed by a group of Hindu and Sikh intellectuals to Mrs. Gandhi in September, 1983, but rejected by her.) Under the terms of the agreement, Chandigarh was to become the capital solely of Punjab in January, 1986. Official commissions were to make recommendations on what land from Punjab would be awarded to Haryana for its loss of Chandigarh and on what compensation the innocent victims of the violence in Punjab since August of 1982 should receive. A judicial tribunal was to decide on the distribution of river waters. The agreement was silent on the fate of thousands of Sikh agitators and terrorists, mostly young people, who are in jail in Punjab. Although the agreement postponed dealing with most of the difficult issues in the Anandpur Sahib resolutions, it immediately came under attack by leaders of Rajiv's own party, especially those from Haryana and Rajasthan. Again, although Longowal won his party's acceptance of the agreement in a meeting in Anandpur Sahib on July 26th, its reception among the Sikhs was lukewarm or outright hostile. His key lieutenants, Prakash Singh Badal, the former chief minister of Punjab, and Gurcharan Singh Tohra, chief of the Sikhs' temple-management committee—which, among other things, controls the purse strings of the Sikh temples—initially withheld their approval, perhaps because they were left out of the negotiations. The Sikhs who were followers of Bhindranwale and who are now being led by Bhindranwale's eighty-four-year-old father, Joginder Singh, condemned the agreement as a "sellout." But they had had little use for Longowal since Operation Blue Star: like Bhindranwale, Longowal was in the Golden Temple at the time of the battle, but, unlike him, he surrendered to Mrs. Gandhi's Army.

On August 20th, Longowal was shot dead in the village of Sherpur, in Punjab, by the extremists. His death is being seen here as a personal and political tragedy, since without his statesmanship the enforcement of the agreement, the neutralization of the extremists, the holding of elections in Punjab—the whole policy of Rajiv to find a quick solution to the Sikh problem—have been put into doubt.

People here are saying that whether Rajiv will eventually be able to bring peace to Punjab may still depend on the continuing effect on Sikh politics of Operation Blue Star. That action was applauded by all the newspapers here, but the Sikh historian and novelist Khushwant Singh has said of it, "What the Akalis failed to achieve by persuasion and agitation may be achieved by the events of June 6, 1984," and "Far from crushing the Khalistan movement, it has given it the sustenance it lacked and weakened the hands of Sikhs like me who are bitterly opposed to it." Neither Khushwant Singh nor anyone else here can say whether that movement will peter out, like so many other secessionist campaigns, or begin the process of unravelling the Indian Union.

NEWSPAPERS here are still full of the aftermath of what is termed "the greatest factory-based accident in human history." In the early morning of December 3, 1984, forty thousand kilos of methyl-isocyanate gas was abruptly released into the atmosphere by a pesticide plant situated in Bhopal, in the state of Madhya Pradesh, in central India, and operated by the Indian subsidiary of the Union Carbide Corporation. As white clouds of the gas billowed from the plant and the entire neighborhood and the city misted over, people's eyes watered profusely, as if chili powder had been thrown in their faces, and they gasped for air. People vomited. People fell unconscious. People ran hither and thither—some of them toward the plant—for cover. Many people were crushed in the stampede. At least twenty-five hundred people died in the accident, and many thousands were injured, and all its terrible aftereffects may not be known for years. (According to one estimate, upward of two hundred thousand people will continue to feel the effects for years to come.)

The explanation generally accepted here for what caused the accident is that water somehow was introduced into the tank in which the MIC was stored, setting off a chemical reaction, and then protective mechanisms—one to neutralize the gas with caustic soda, another to burn it off—failed to function. At the time, most of the supervisory personnel had gone home. What the workers did or didn't do (for that matter, what they could have done) and a hundred other questions may not be answered until testimony is heard in either of two civil cases now before Judge John Keenan, of the federal district court in New York City—one a complaint by the Indian government against the Union Carbide Corporation, which has a majority interest in its Indian subsidiary; and the other a complaint consolidating a hundred and four suits brought against the corporation by various American lawyers on behalf of thousands of Indian clients. (No criminal charges have been pressed against any American officials of Union Carbide, although when Warren Anderson, its chairman, flew to Bhopal to investigate the accident the government denied him access to the plant and its records and arrested him, as if it intended to start a criminal proceeding against him. But at the intervention of the Prime Minister's office he was quickly released and flown home.) The press, however, is full of allegations of gross negligence at the plant: safety precautions were primitive, and workers often did not wear the required gloves and breathing masks; as a result of management's false economies, the plant was understaffed, supervisory personnel were untrained, and some critical spare parts were unavailable.

People here insist that an accident like Bhopal could just as easily have occurred in an advanced country as in a poor, underdeveloped country; the examples of Three Mile Island, in the United States, and of the dioxin contamination in Seveso, Italy, are often cited. Indeed, on August 11th of this year, a toxic gas made up of several chemicals escaped from a Union Carbide plant in Institute, West Virginia, injuring at least a hundred and thirty-five area residents—and this after a new safety system had been installed in the plant in the wake of the accident in Bhopal. Yet common sense tells one that the fact that the Bhopal plant was in a poor country must have made it more accident-prone. Laborers in India have to work under the debilitating pressures of poor diet, poor health, poor housing, and poor wages, often with a large number of children and relatives to support. They may have no easy means of transport to their place of work—indeed, may have to travel long distances on foot to reach it, whatever the weather. Their efficiency and their attitude toward their job are bound to be very different from

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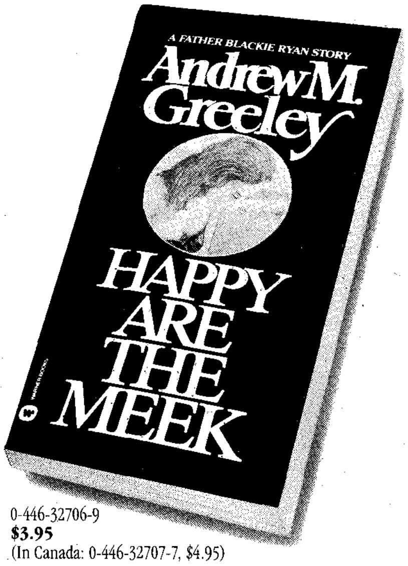

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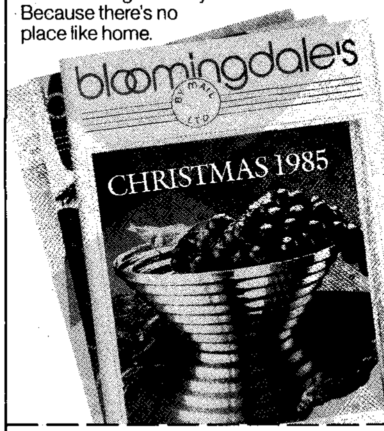

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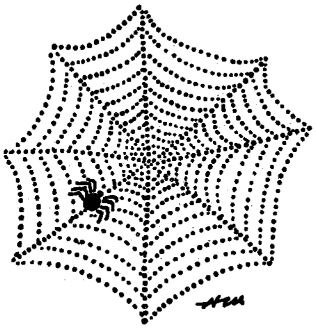
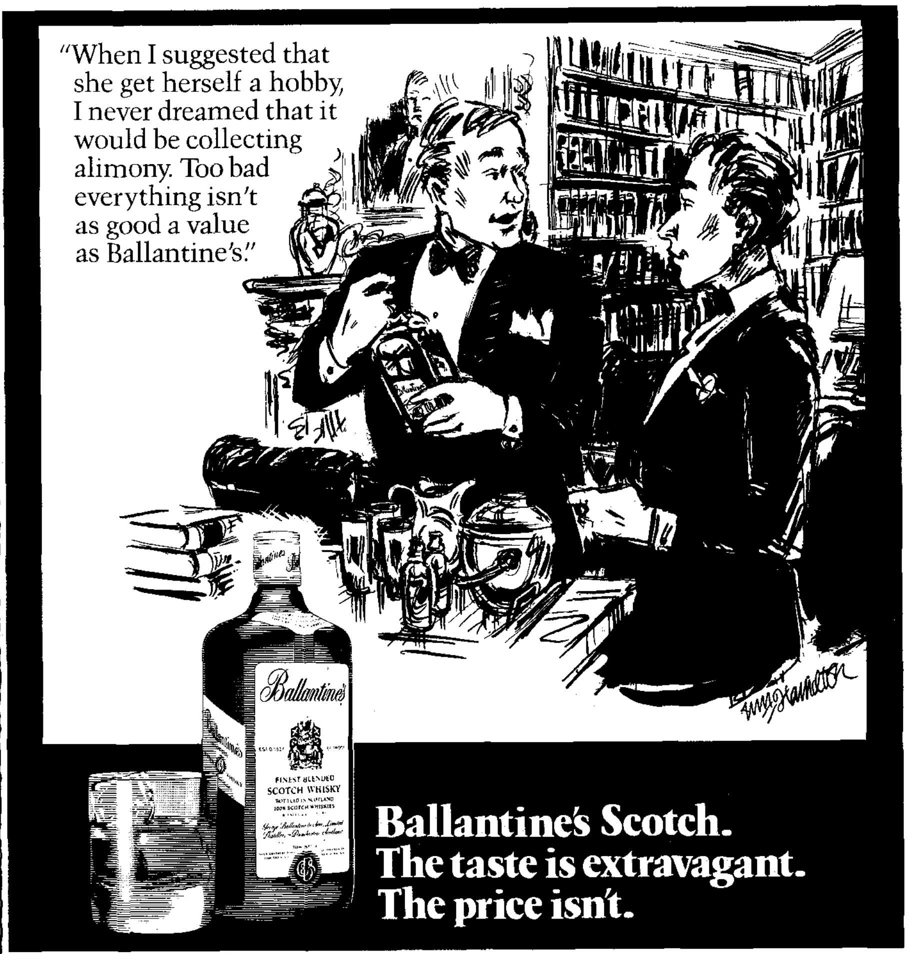
When the Bhopal plant was constructed, in the nineteen-sixties, it was located in a sparsely populated area of the city—at the time, it was simply a mixing and packaging plant. In the late nineteen-seventies, Union Carbide substantially expanded the plant and started producing the lethal MIC, when, it has been argued in retrospect, it would have been well advised to move the plant to an area outside the city limits, where other industries considered hazardous were situated. In fact, in 1975, the state legislature had passed a comprehensive town-planning act for Bhopal which stipulated that there should be no hazardous industry within the city. The state town-planning department later labelled eighteen industries hazardous or "obnoxious," and started monitoring them, but the list did not include the pesticide industry. The effect of this was to exempt Union Carbide from rules that applied to other industries producing hazardous materials in the state, and to keep the Congress Indira state government in the good graces of a rich American company. (Politicians often got jobs at the plant for their relatives and friends.) Furthermore, over the years, slum settlements had grown up around the plant. A few of the squatters had casual employment there, but most of them were tonga drivers, cigarette sellers, bicycle repairers, milkmen, porters, sweepers—the kind of poor people who inevitably settle around any industrial plant here and piece out a livelihood by providing services for its employees. In April of 1984, the chief minister of the state, Arjun Singh, gave the squatters ownership of the bits of land under their makeshift shacks and lean-tos, and so legalized what had been illegal settlements. His motive might have been to win votes for the Congress Indira, or to help the poorest of the poor. Whatever his motive, it made the dangerous situation worse. When a minister was specifically asked in the legislative assembly about the Union Carbide plant, he said that it was "not a toy to be played around with." It was observed that the plant represented an investment of two hundred and fifty million rupees. (The current rate of exchange is twelve rupees to the dollar.) Some Indian lawyers are now arguing that the state government must share the responsibility for the severity of the accident—on the grounds that it did not clear away the settlements or carefully monitor the hazard that the plant posed to the community—and that the victims or the victims' families should sue not only the Union Carbide Corporation but also the state government. Other lawyers, however, point out that even if the state government is culpable the common-law principle of the unity of the crown would block the use of the courts—part of the government—to sue the government. Anyway, the target of all the court cases seems to be the corporation.



After the accident, many American lawyers rushed to India, got themselves Indian law partners, went to Bhopal, and signed up, on contingency, the injured and the families of the dead for individual lawsuits, to be tried in American courts against Union Carbide. These "ambulance-chasing" lawyers aroused public hostility, and the Indian Parliament passed a bill that gave the central government sole authority to represent the victims. The Indian partners of the American lawyers have challenged the constitutionality of this bill in a writ-petition presented to the Supreme Court here. If the Court should decide in favor of the Indian government, there would still be a problem with the government's speaking for the victims, since if it is a guilty party—and the principle of the unity of the crown seems to hold that the state government and the central government are one—how can it, in good conscience, arrogate to itself the right to speak for those whom it injured? And there is the separate issue of whether an American court would agree to assume jurisdiction over the case when the accident occurred in a country some ten thousand miles away and much of the evidence and many of the witnesses are there. Still, it is being pointed out here that the designers of the plant and the top officials of the corporation are Americans, and are in the United States. Lawyers here are discussing two contradictory precedents in which American companies were involved in an accident in a foreign country. One concerns the crash of an Air India Boeing 747 in Bombay, in 1978, after which the families of the victims sued the Boeing Corporation in the state of Washington; in that instance, a federal district court allowed the case to be tried in the American courts. The other concerns the crash of a Piper airplane in Scotland; in that instance, the Supreme Court decided that the United States was not the proper country in which to try the case. Dr. Armin Rosencranz, the executive director of the California-based Pioneer Fund, after making a study of the legal and environmental aspects of the Bhopal accident, concluded that the United States court might well ask the Indian courts to deal with the Union Carbide case.

Many people here are hoping that the lawsuit or lawsuits will be decided in the United States, where the monetary value placed on lives lost and injuries sustained is hundreds of times what it is here. The Indian Workmen's Compensation Act fixes the liability of a company for a life lost on the job because of proved company negligence at ten thousand rupees. In extraordinary cases, it allows for forty thousand rupees. (In any case, the slum dwellers would not be covered by workmen's compensation, because they were not employees—they were a "third party." What is more to the point, however, is that it is not clear, from the evidence available so far, how employees other than those working in the plant at the time of the accident could claim coverage.) But most Indian workmen's-compensation cases never go to court, because the courts require from plaintiffs a nonrefundable deposit of ten per cent of the damages sought. Besides, litigation here is so protracted and Kafkaesque that people don't as a rule turn to the courts for remedial action.

It is often pointed out here that the victims of the Bhopal accident who are dead and gone are beyond the reach of compensation. But it may be that their families and the injured are also beyond the reach of compensation. Most of the survivors were casual laborers. Many of them never had a postal address. Many of them had the same first name, or similar ones, and no surname. They were never enrolled on the register of any company—had no employment record of any kind. Most of them have probably already drifted off, to the villages from which they came, or to wherever they can find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casual work, or to wherever they can get their stomachs filled. It is now being said here that whatever the eventual award or settlement, whether American largesse or Indian scantiness, the only money the survivors themselves will ever see will be what the state government distributed within days of the accident, apparently with an eye on the general election coming up a couple of weeks later—the election in which the month-old Prime Ministership of Rajiv Gandhi and the future of the state government were at stake. The government gave ten thousand rupees to every family that could prove that a close relative had died, two thousand rupees to every victim "seriously affected," and one thousand to every victim "not so seriously affected." In any event, people here think that the compensation case will probably be settled out of court.

Whatever the outcome, people here take it for granted that pesticides will continue to be produced in India. The country's next Five-Year Plan calls for doubling the production of pesticides. They are necessary to raise crop yields and to keep much-needed foreign exchange from being spent on the importation of foodstuffs. In fact, there is no means of getting away from the production of huge quantities of pesticides if Indians are to be fed and are also to be saved from the ravages of parasite-borne diseases like malaria and filariasis, still endemic in this part of the world. —Ved Mehta

•

Considering the small size of his output, the music of Carl Ruggles presents some surprising confusions of identification, which had better be cleared up at once. *Angels* originally formed the middle movement of a triptych, or chamber symphony, completed in 1920 and titled *Men and Angels*. The first segment, *Men*, was later destroyed; the last, *Sun-Treader*, was revised to become the first movement of a new work, *Men and Mountains*, written for small orchestra in 1924 and revised for large orchestra twelve years later. In its new position, this *Sun-Treader* was in turn named *Men;* but the new *Men* piece is not the same as the *Men* of *Men and Angels*, nor has this ex-*Sun-Treader* anything to do with another, single-movement orchestral work called *Sun-Treader* composed between 1926 and 1931.—*Stagebill.*

Any questions?

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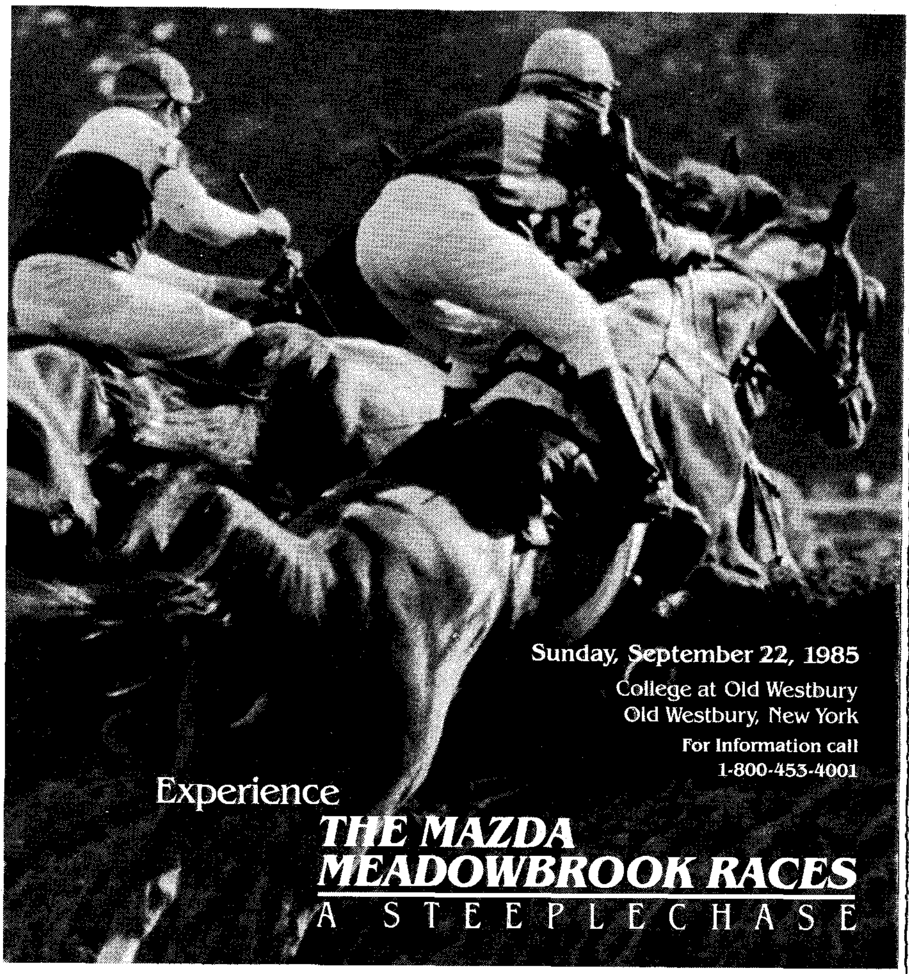

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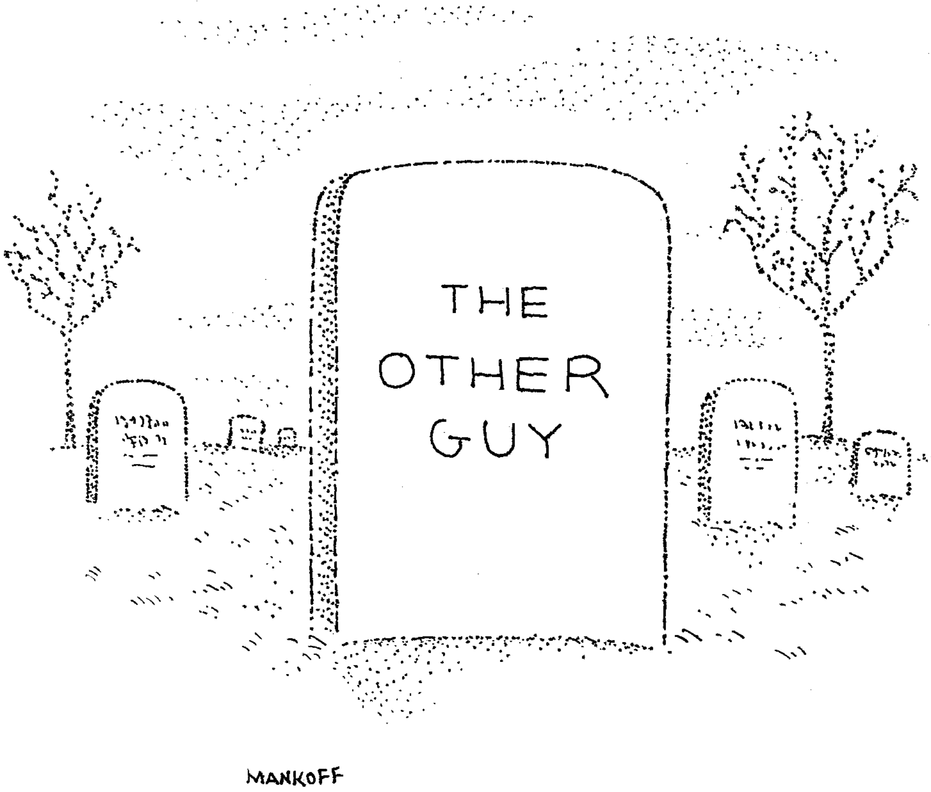
THE revival, at the Promenade, of "Curse of the Starving Class," Sam Shepard's passionate, funny, and ultimately tragic play about a family shattered by poverty, is better than good enough, although it does not dim in memory its glorious original production, at the Public in 1978. The action, to remind you as briefly as possible, is set in the kitchen of a ranch house in California, where at the beginning the young son of the family is knocking together a door to replace the one his drunken father kicked to pieces the night before. His much younger, teen-age sister raises hell when she finds, on opening the refrigerator, that the chicken she has prepared as an exhibit for her forthcoming talk to the 4-H Club has been eaten by her mother. The refrigerator door opens and slams shut throughout; much of the time, there is nothing whatever within. In one scene, the father returns and fills the refrigerator to the brim with artichokes, which are then tossed about with great comic abandon. That slamming door is a bleak running gag, and a clue to the play. The family acres are yielding little, the animals are dying off, and the efforts, especially of the son, to hold at bay the sleazy lawyer and other disreputable characters who are out to grab the land for purposes of their own ultimately come to nothing. In one brilliant, imaginative soliloquy, the son describes these "zombies," with their bulldozers and wrecking balls, whose aim, he asserts, is to cover the whole country with concrete. This theme, in play after play, has become an obsession of Shepard's, and nowhere is it realized in more masterly fashion than in "Curse of the Starving Class." If my synopsis has made it sound grim, I have totally misled you; it is so filled with witty lines and quirky comic business that, laughing throughout, we realize only at the horrifying end that we have been watching a tragedy the whole time. Much of the wit (and seriousness) is set forth in soliloquies—verbal riffs so dazzling that they disarm even one as resistant to monologues as I am.

The actors, under Robin Lynn Smith's direction, do well. As the mother of the family, the most complex of the characters, who is torn to bits by her feelings—her love and concern for her children, and her need to escape—Kathy Bates gives a performance of strength and subtlety. As the son, a young actor named Bradley Whitford, whose physical resemblance to the playwright cannot be accidental, gives full measure to his every line and notion. Karen Tull is the spunky daughter, with dreams of becoming an auto mechanic. As the father, at first very drunk and later very sober, Eddie Jones, of the original company, capably bears the burden of the tragedy. James Gleason is the sleazy lawyer, and Jude Ciccolella, Stephen Bradbury, and Dan Patrick Brady split four disreputable characters among them. I cannot deny that in some instances I missed the eloquence of the first production, but, aside from that, nothing is skimped, and everything is made clear. Commendable setting, costumes, and lighting, by Brian Martin, Frances Nelson, and Mark W. Stanley, respectively.

FOR the record: "The Mystery of Edwin Drood," which will run through September 1st in the Park, is a musical adaptation, by Rupert Holmes, of Dickens' unfinished novel as it might have been performed at a Victorian music hall. The aggregation of talent is impressive, even by New York Shakespeare Festival standards. Mr. Holmes' pastiche music sounds chipper enough. The costumes, by Lindsay W. Davis, are witty and beautiful, and the scenery, by Bob Shaw, and lighted by Paul Gallo, is beautiful, too. Among the actors, George Rose presides over Betty Buckley (as shifty Drood), Howard McGillin (as his wicked uncle, John Jasper), Patti Cohenour (as his fiancée, Rosa Bud), Cleo Laine (as a sinister whore who runs an opium den), and Larry Shue, Joe Grifasi, Jana Schneider, John Herrera, Jerome Dempsey, and Don Kehr in other roles. All of them sing well and are sometimes funny. Nevertheless, it must be said that the first act is endless and the performance as a whole is all but done in by the blaring electronic amplification, which on the evening I was there rendered most of the words—lines and lyrics—unintelligible. The second act, picking up where Dickens left off, breaks free and goes somewhat better. It becomes a participation show, in which the audience must solve the mysterious disappearance of Drood by voting on his murderer. There is considerable ingenuity in the production, but it must be remembered that Charles Dickens was one of the great humorists in the language, and much of the campy friskiness on display in the Park is completely at odds with his style. Wilford Leach was the director.

—EDITH OLIVER



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DEPARTMENT OF AMPLIFICATION

THIS happened just half an hour after I had arrived at the Rialto market in Venice, very early one morning in July. I was, at the time, watching boxes of squash with their flowers still on being unloaded from a barge while I halfway listened to an aria being hummed by a nearby fishmonger, who was arranging his display of *rospi* and other *pesci freschissimi* from the Adriatic. (A *rospo* has a set of pointed little teeth, giving Venetian fishmongers the opportunity to liven up rows of inert sea creatures by bending around an occasional specimen's tail and hooking it into the mouth.) A couple of fruit sellers were engaged in what seemed to be a ritualistic mock disparagement of each other's display. Another fishmonger was whistling another song. Suddenly, I heard myself exclaim, "Of course! It's Kansas City!"

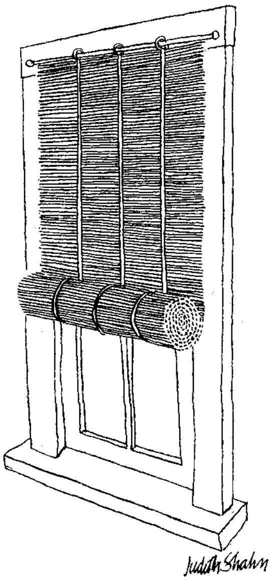
Maybe I'd better explain that. I have previously acknowledged in these pages that I am a sucker for markets; the most recent acknowledgment was in a piece from Provence, last fall, in which I suggested that French towns be required to announce on their city-limits signs which day is market day, the way American towns sometimes announce the time and place of the regular Kiwanis lunches. I am a sucker for those weekly markets in the squares of small French towns—the sort of markets patronized mainly by housewives with large straw baskets and sharp eyes. I am a sucker for the wholesale city markets that cater to people like produce distributors and restaurant proprietors; the section of the Venice market I was strolling through was like that except that the characteristic city-market sound of trucks in low gear was missing. When I think of Japan, I often think of the vast wholesale fish market in Tokyo; when I think of Mexico, I often think of the great Saturday-morning market in Oaxaca. The appeal of markets is so obvious to me that I never thought it necessary to explain the sources of my interest; in fact, in writing several years ago from the West of England about gathering provisions that included some runner-bean chutney and Cheshire cheese that didn't make it to the larder, I admitted being completely baffled as to why so many of the other tourists were at the Tower of London or the Changing of the Guard instead of at Barnstaple Market.

I have always understood, though, that my love of markets began when I was a child in Kansas City—when I used to go to the city market once a summer with my father. In those days, he went six days a week, all year round. My father was in the grocery business. When he began in business, he had taken for granted the necessity of going to the city market every day to pick out his own produce, and, despite growing evidence that other grocers were managing quite nicely by placing their orders on the telephone, he continued going to the market daily for years—a custom that required him to get up every morning at four o'clock. (When people he met learned what time the alarm went off at our house, they tended to say to my father, "Well, I guess you get used to it after a while," and he always said, "No, not really.") To me, of course, going to the market was an annual adventure rather than a daily chore. The market people seemed particularly animated and jolly; a number of them carried on running repartees with my father that had become well polished over the years. The closest thing Kansas City had to the European ethnic neighborhoods of an Eastern city was a small Italian community on the northeast side, and my only contact with it as a child was at the city market; a lot of the people who pressed apples on me or joked with my father about the quality of the green beans had names like Palermo or Cipolla. My memory of the details of those annual visits is so flawed that I distinctly remember shivering in the early-morning cold as I waited for my father to pull the car out of the garage—nobody has ever been cold in Kansas City in the summer, early in the morning or at any other time—but the total impression obviously became the model for markets I visited years after that. However hazy the details of that model, I knew that somehow no other wholesale market I visited—not even renowned places like Les Halles, in Paris, or Covent Garden, in London—completely fulfilled my vision of what a city market is supposed to be. Then, in

Venice, as I listened to the fishmongers' songs and watched the banter of the fruit sellers, I finally realized what markets in other parts of the world had lacked in reaching toward the Kansas City ideal: Italians.

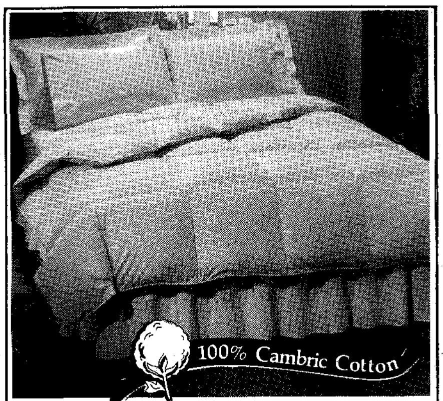
I wish I could report that Italy, with its almost unique capacity for having every stall manned by an Italian, has only markets that the most demanding market-trotter would find faultless. I did, in fact, run across a number of foodstuffs that would inspire any vender to break out in song. In Greve, a market town in the Chianti Classico wine country, south of Florence, I stood in front of the cheese vender and polished off some fresh Parmesan that made me wonder what I had seen in the Cheshire at Barnstaple. A number of markets had fruit so spectacular that even my father would have had difficulty pretending to take it for last week's leftovers. But for every stand selling cheese or salami or vegetables in the small-town weekly markets there were at least half a dozen stalls selling dresses or bluejeans or detergent or mop handles. If I had heard myself exclaiming something half an hour after I arrived at the first weekly market I went to—the Monday market in San Casciano, near Florence—it would have been "I don't come to markets to buy scrub brushes."

It's not that I have anything against markets that don't concentrate on foodstuffs. One of the markets I have most enjoyed walking around, a monthly market held on the grounds of a temple in Kyoto, was not dominated by food—although, now that I think of it, some of the particularly mysterious items I saw on display there could have been edible, for all I know. But what I found offered for sale at San Casciano was mostly the sort of thing you might encounter at a discount store in a strip shopping center. I had arrived at about eight in the morning, eager and a little bit hungry. By eight-thirty, I was rather dispirited. Then, in the one row of stalls devoted to food, I came across a man standing behind a hog. He had just opened one of those small market trucks that fold down on one side to provide a showcase and a high counter. In the case was an entire roasted hog—entire except for its head, that is, which was displayed on the counter. The man had a huge knife, and he cut pork off any part of the hog that struck the customer's fancy. He sold meat from the hog by the kilo. He also made sandwiches out of the hog and sold them. Presumably, at the end of the day the hog was gone, and the next week the vender would come back with another hog. His presence cheered me. I had a sandwich, and I was cheered even more. The market seemed more like a market. Also, I admire a man who can make an industry out of a hog.



Eight o'clock was actually rather late for me to have arrived. I associate markets—particularly wholesale food markets—with the early hours. When my father was more or less retired, he sometimes went down to the city market to play in the pitch game that formed when the main activity of the day was over, and, as I remember, the game used to start about the time other people were going to work. Any place I've been seems different in the early-morning hours, but in Venice the contrast between early morning and the rest of the day was particularly vivid. On the morning I went early to the market on the Rialto, I walked across Venice at about six, and I had to stop to count the people in the Piazza San Marco. Besides me, there were seven. Three were sweeping, and two were putting out café chairs. I hardly need to say what the two others were doing: he was taking a picture of her standing in front of the Basilica.

The fact that market people keep odd hours may be one of the reasons that they don't seem to observe conventions having to do with when it is appropriate to eat what. In that respect, I think, they are challenged as an occupational group only by Army cooks, who are always strolling around the mess-hall kitchen dipping a spoon into a bowl of something you wouldn't have expected them to be eating just then. If an Italian fishmonger or a French butcher walks into a market café at six in the morning, there is no



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way to know whether he's going to order coffee or a ham sandwich or onion soup or scrambled eggs or just cognac. At the Tokyo fish market, I passed a tiny café that seemed to serve only *tonkatsu*—a Japanese dish that would seem less exotic than it sounds to a traveller from, say, Arkansas when he recognized it as fried pork chops—and I was astonished to see that the place was jammed at five-thirty in the morning. I could hardly find a seat.

I noticed an Italian equivalent of the *tonkatsu* joint this summer when, a few days after visiting the market in Venice, I spent an early morning at the Central Market in Florence. The Central Market is a collection of retail stalls in a great pile of a nineteenth-century building near the center of the city. As splendid as the building is, I wasn't surprised to read in a guidebook that it sat empty for years because the market people, then in open stalls closer to the Arno, refused to move into it. When it comes to being set in their ways, market people can't be compared with Army cooks or anybody else. It's a trait I've always found admirable—or, at least, familiar. When a vegetable vender is adding up my purchases on the paper he's about to wrap them in, I am never tempted to ask him why he doesn't use the cash register behind him; that would be as useful as asking my father why he didn't just phone in his produce order. Those in charge of Florence in the late nineteenth century did what city administrators have customarily had to do in order to force venders into a new market: they tore down the old one.

Florence is a meat-and-potatoes town—especially meat. The main floor of the Central Market is dominated by butcher shops. When I stopped by the only café in the building, I found that its specialty was a meat sandwich—veal, the day I was there. The sandwich-maker carved slices from a large piece of veal that was sitting in a platter, in an inch or two of juice. Then he chopped the slices into finer pieces. Then he took a bun, sliced it in two, placed both halves in the veal platter inner-side down, and, with an index finger on each half, submerged them in the juice. Then he packed up the dripping bun with the veal, added what appeared to be about a quarter of a cup of salt, and handed it over. Breakfast.

I didn't have a veal sandwich myself—and not, I hasten to say, because I had changed my market eating habits since my early-morning adventures with *tonkatsu* and runner-bean chutney. I was temporarily full from the effects of two or three *bocconcini*. A *bocconcino* is a mozzarella cheese about the size of an egg. If you play your market stalls right, it's a buffalo-milk mozzarella cheese about the size of an egg. Nobody can criticize it as food that is inappropriate for eating at six or seven in the morning: it's soft, it's mild, and it's absolutely oozing milk. In Italy, I adopted it as my market snack, although I have to say that at the Central Market in Florence I eventually backed it up with some of the café's bean soup. In fact, the more *bocconcini* I ate, the more I came around to the view that, upon examination, the paragons we remember from childhood never had the perfection in reality that they have in our memories. Even today, I would guess, *bocconcini* are not available in Kansas City.

—Calvin Trillin

• •

ON VISITING UNCLE WALTER AT CREEDMOOR

Hungarian, our too-long faces stare
as if from mirrors or from photographs.
Austrian lines have written epitaphs
around Rumanian mouths. Our eyes, our hair
speak Latvian as if they were born there,
while schizophrenic Uncle Walter laughs
at his twin knees, those sober Yugoslavs.
Our Russian bodies hold what they can bear:

trees from the broken forest, hearts of stone,
a loaf of bread cooling inside a towel,
or nothing, nothing much—a box of candy
packaged in some quaint Bavarian factory,
each secret kernel molded like a vowel
from every other language but our own.

—Ellen Kaufman

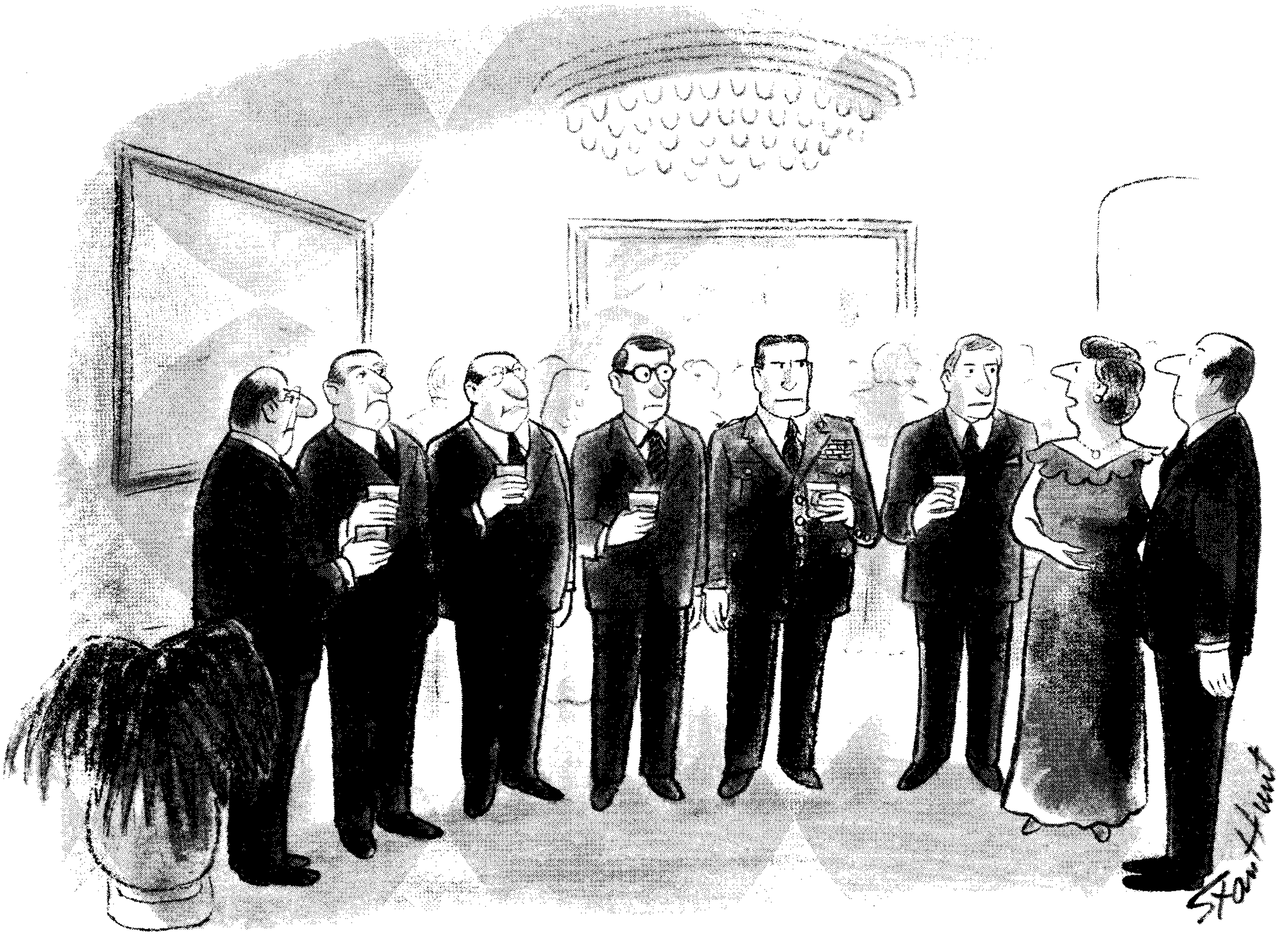
THE ART WORLD

Not Happy to Be Here

PERHAPS the highest compliment I can pay Caravaggio's work is to say that three hundred and seventy-five years have not dimmed its power to be showy, pushy, and hollow. The Italian painter—thirty-nine of whose pictures were recently the centerpiece of the Metropolitan's "The Age of Caravaggio" exhibition—is considered one of the revolutionary figures in European art. The reputation of Michelangelo da Caravaggio (1571-1610) is based on his having brought a new, everyday realism to painting and his making oil painting itself a more vital, true-to-life art. It is said that in emphasizing the contrasts of sharp, bright light and darkened, near-black settings he gave painting a theatrical immediacy. At the Met's show, the first major Caravaggio exhibition ever held outside Italy, it was obvious why he was a showstopper in his time, but his pictures are tacky, and you don't believe in them. What's historic about him is that he seems to be one of the first artists who are calculating about their material. He seems to use it brazenly one moment, sentimentally the next.

The Caravaggios were accompanied by five rooms (which you had to go through first) of pictures by painters of the generation before him in northern Italy, where he was from, and by his contemporaries in Rome and Naples, where he worked. The point was to show that he didn't spring from nowhere—and, more important, how different he was. That came across clearly. In the long prelude, there were moderately interesting pictures by Rubens, the Carracci, Gentileschi, Elsheimer, and others, but it was easier to look at the Caravaggios. They're less stuffy, religious, mothbally. Caravaggio's scenes—of Judith and Holofernes, David and Goliath, the Stigmatization of St. Francis, the Sacrifice of Isaac, the Supper at Emmaus—and his portraits of individual saints, such as St. Catherine, are starker, more elegant and monumental. You get everything immediately. The problem is that you don't get much, and there is little to come back to; there is no resonance, or mystery. Having so many pictures by artists other than Caravaggio may have seemed like filler at first, but they were necessary; without them he loses his punch.

According to the Met catalogue, more has been written about Caravaggio since 1951—when, in Milan, he was given his first comprehensive show—than in the preceding three hundred and fifty years. Though he was famous and influential during and right after his roughly fifteen-year-long career (he died at thirty-eight), his work was ignored or scorned thereafter. He is a true twentieth-century rediscovery (Roger Fry was among the first to champion him), and there is a modern sensibility poking out from his paintings. When you look



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at, for instance, his "Saint Catherine of Alexandria," your first response isn't, as it might be with a Renaissance painter, There's St. Catherine. Your first response is, This is some woman dressed as St. Catherine. Caravaggio must be one of the first artists to make us wonder how much they believe in the mythical and Biblical personalities and tales they paint. And he was clearly drawn to certain ones because they gave him a chance to present his own obsessions. Taken together, his pictures tell a surprisingly complete and explicit story of homosexual love. We see the beautiful boys and young men—who seem to float, even the ones who aren't literally angels—and the weighed-down older men; the rituals of power and weakness (that is one way, at least, to interpret his various flagellation, crucifixion, and David-and-Goliath paintings); the eventual confusion as to which partner is the powerful or the weak one; and the degeneration of the story, in his last works, into violence for the sake of violence.

Caravaggio presents his themes so baldly, though, that when you think about them you're left juggling abstractions. His people are real individuals—they look and feel more like us than, say, Rembrandt's people do—but it's hard to warm up to, or be in awe of, or even remember them. You have little idea of what he feels about them as persons in their own right. He obviously had a great gift for reproducing every kind of animate and inanimate texture—skin, leaves, stuffs, shells—and he impudently introduced naturalistic details, such as dirty fingernails. But he stops with the appearance of people and things. And the glossy surfaces of his pictures don't help. They only keep us at a distance.

There are beautiful passages of painting, especially in his early work. They're primarily odd and quirky moments—when, in "Boy with a Basket of Fruit," a very realistically painted leaf appears to press flat up against the picture plane. Or when, in "Bacchus," he gets carried away painting a flask and a goblet of wine. At first, it's not clear that it is a goblet—it seems to be some purple oval shape with swirling black lines in it that the model holds in his hand. Caravaggio is thought to have invented still-life painting in Italy, and the most engaging works in the show were the three still-lifes (and the still-life parts of his various pictures of boys). Not that they are top drawer. They're early work, and their authenticity has been questioned; and they're reminiscent of those overcrowded still-lifes of assortments of fruit and flowers, with an additional butterfly or lizard, that are in every museum. But Caravaggio's, being among the very first, are awkward and airier, and their surfaces don't have quite the expensive-object gleam that most of his other paintings do.

In these large, horizontal works, Caravaggio lays out his subjects—birds or fruit and vegetables—in a random, all-over way that feels modern. The bird still-life, which is the best, shows fifty-odd (lovingly painted) dead birds, who either hang on strings or have been set around a shelf. The subject and the composition recall Miró, and there's a Miró-like vignette in it: a plate of little birds, whose tail feathers have been plucked. Their heads face downward, their ends are up in the air, and a little black-and-white feather sticks out of each one's end. In much of his work Caravaggio seems to play with ghoulishness; he wants to see how far he can go with shocking people. He's doing that in this still-life, but the effect isn't cardboardy, as it is in his paintings of people. Here it's funny and, in a way, more human. Our hero is an owl, the only bird who, his eyes wide open, is alive. Though he looks straight out, he seems quite aware that he is sitting in what might be called a bird morgue on a busy day, and he is not happy to be here. He is the only figure in the Caravaggio show whose apprehensiveness I really felt.

The greatest Caravaggio I have seen is, in fact, a still-life (and an early work). It is "Still Life with a Basket of Fruit," a roughly twelve-by-eighteen-inch oil that was supposed to be in the show but at the last moment (according to a wall label) was "disallowed" to come by its owner, the Pinacoteca Ambrosiana, in Milan. In its place was a black-and-white photograph set in a period frame. (Caravaggio might have liked this touch.) The picture shows a basket of fruit and leaves that sits on, and juts slightly over, a ledge; behind it is an ivory-colored wall. Because of the way the basket juts out, we feel we're looking up at it, and it can resemble a crown. Everything about the picture is surprising. The leaves and stems seem to itch to get out of the basket; they're like a bunch of cooped-up snakes. They're so real you want to touch them, yet the ones on the right especially are paper-thin—they appear as

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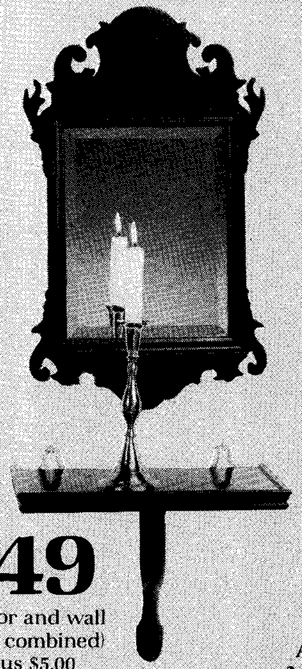

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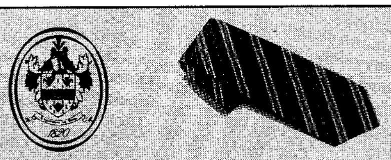

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if they had gone too close to the wall and been flattened against it. The basket is also a lustrous and graspable object that, *on one side*, becomes a knife-edge-thin silhouette that joins with the wall. The wall itself is a character in the picture. It's of a yellow-gray ivory that, even in reproduction, feels warm one instant and cool the next. In this little patch of wall Caravaggio gives us the essence of all the flat, bare, dry—yet beckoning—walls that one sees on buildings throughout Italy. Even more than his figure paintings, this regal picture jumps out of its historical time frame. Without an accompanying label, it would be hard to say when the picture was painted. It seems kin to Oriental screens, Byzantine mosaics, folk-art paintings.

Thinking about this and his other, less dynamic still-lifes in relation to the rest of his work, you can feel that in spirit and substance Caravaggio was always a still-life painter. His wizardry at painting fruit and leaves may explain why the faces of his people are so waxy and plump and pluckable, and why his settings are so shallow and boxlike. He paints light the way a still-life painter might, too. His light isn't mysterious; it's as if it were the product of spotlights that he had precisely arranged.

The most gripping aspect of the exhibition wasn't about art—it was about how an artist of high ambition goes off in a direction where he may not be doing what comes to him instinctively. You feel that Caravaggio continued to paint religious and mythical scenes and portraits because that was what a first-class painter had to do. He couldn't be a still-life painter, not because that was a second-class territory but because it wasn't a territory. At least in the Italian art of his time, he was the first man on the scene—so he had no one to measure himself against. And he seems to have wanted to measure himself continually. His very personality is about confrontation. His life story is punctuated with descriptions of run-ins with friends, strangers, and the law. He was arrested for illegal possession of arms, he was imprisoned for insulting an officer, he threw a plate of artichokes in a waiter's face—and on and on—and finally he had to skip town when, after a fight over a tennis match, he went all the way and killed a guy. He seems to have always desired to have someone or something to hit—perhaps in order to refresh his sense of who he himself

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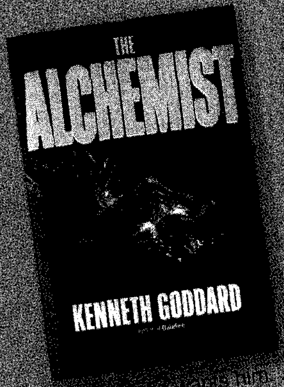
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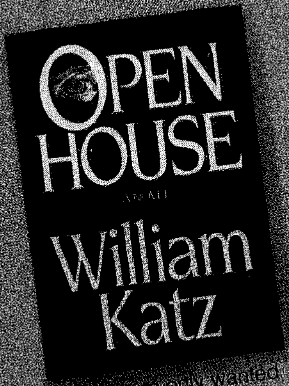
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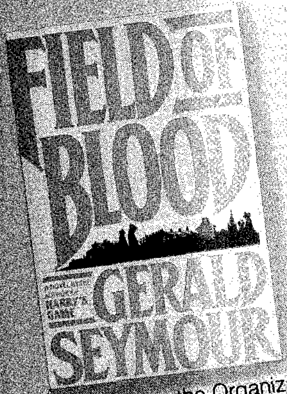
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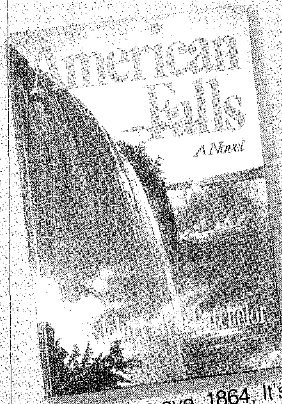
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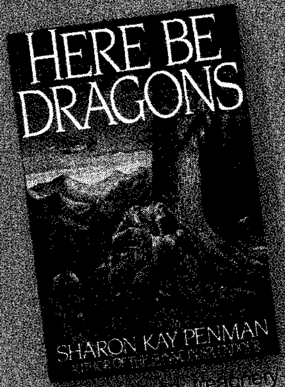
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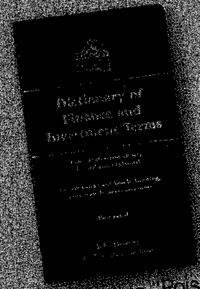
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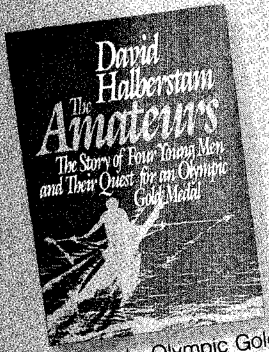
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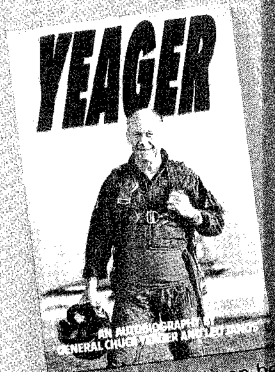
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was. Having painted his few still-lifes, he may have felt (understandably) that there was nothing more to say. There were no traditions there to play off. He was the tradition.

Caravaggio is really less a painter-poet than a painter-engineer. His chief concern seems to be to make a picture look smart and solid from any distance. He seems to most want to arrange objects in a shallow space in such a way that they look as if they could tumble out onto the viewer. The little still-life in Milan is his most successful picture in part because he states his aims with a primitive directness. He works as a trompe-l'oeil painter; he makes it look as though the basket might literally fall out of the picture.

As he got older, Caravaggio took his ideas to the limit. He drains away specific colors and reduces everything to blackish browns and whitish ivories. His space becomes so shallow it's an unreal dream space. The last room at the show included the work he did in the last four years of his life, when, after that tennis match, he was on the lam. After leaving Rome, he was in Naples, then Malta, then Sicily. On his return to Naples, his enemies caught up with him and disfigured his face with a knife. He fled north, landing in Port'Ercole, where he was mistakenly thrown in prison for a couple of days. He was released, but, heading south along the coast toward Rome, he caught a fever, and died of it a short while later. During these travelling years, he made large portraits of a named and of an unnamed Knight of Malta—they may be of the same man. The one where the knight is accompanied by a blond-haired page, who shyly yet knowingly looks out at us (and has what resembles an eighties version of a fifties short haircut), is especially strong.

But this last room was stifling and hellish. Most of the scenes were gruesome. There was a "David with the Head of Goliath" where a pained David holds at arm's length the dripping head of the giant—Goliath's powerful face is said to be the artist's self-portrait. Bloody as they were, these were, in effect, showy pictures. They aren't more substantial than his earlier ones. He seems to paint more honestly, though. His figures are no longer so many preserved, waxy goods. His light is less glaring. Everything feels washy and far away. He could be making the art of an old man.

Though it's not the classiest picture, "The Toothpuller" (which is attributed to him) held me the longest. We see eight people seated or standing around a table. One fellow is having a tooth pulled while the rest look on. The picture is a bit like works that show Christ being gaped at and taunted and jeered. Except in this case there is no Christ, no one we identify with. You look at the people and you're pulled toward the clenched and sweaty faces of the man having his tooth pulled and the man who yanks, and it's like being sucked into a hole, into faces without souls—faces that are nothing more than the giving and the getting of physical pain. In this picture Caravaggio suggests Goya, though without Goya's irony or gusto. I found "The Toothpuller" nauseating, but it feels truer to Caravaggio than most of his other pictures. This time, he shows his horror straight; he doesn't filter it through the screen of a Biblical or mythological story.

Caravaggio is thought of as a raw and youthful artist, perhaps because his art has a melodramatic rashness. Certainly he helped get under way a new kind of monumental figure painting. Georges de La Tour, Rembrandt, and other seventeenth-century painters apparently borrowed from his lighting and composition (and you think of them when you see him). But Caravaggio is an end-of-the-line, rather than a pioneering, personality. And, in historical terms, he is one of the last distinctive individuals of the great age of Italian painting. He often painted martyrdom and ritual sacrifices, and, in a sense, he became what he painted. His body of work has the quality of an offering. His ideas were given life by later, less tradition-bound artists. When you turn from his dark backgrounds to Rembrandt's dark backgrounds, it's like going from an artificially darkened nowhere out into a real night.

—Sanford Schwartz

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BOOKS

A Biographer's Biography

JAMES LEES-MILNE'S two-volume "Harold Nicolson" (Shoe String Press/Archon; $25 each volume) is the biography of a biographer who did *not* believe that the art of biography had much of a future. Toward the end of "The Development of English Biography" (1928)—a brilliant history and analysis in less than a hundred and fifty duodecimo pages—Nicolson speculated about that future. Abandoning his earlier distinction between "pure" and "impure" biography, he wrote that there would be an increasing difference between "scientific" and "literary" works, and that the former would win the field. "The scientific interest in biography is hostile to, and will in the end prove destructive of, the literary interest," he wrote. "The former will insist not only on the facts, but on all the facts; the latter demands a partial or artificial representation of facts. The scientific interest, as it develops, will become insatiable; no synthetic power, no genius for representation, will be able to keep the pace." Harold Nicolson was often wrong about the future. (He was almost always right about the past.) In the appendix of his curious futuristic novel "Public Faces" (1932) he imagined with rueful amusement a biographical notice of himself written by his grandson in the early nineteen-seventies, in a communized Britain, where traditional English spelling would be replaced by something like a Shavian alphabet: "Harold Nikolson," all but forgotten, would have died in 1958. (Nicolson actually died in 1968.) What happened instead was a surge of interest in his life, stimulated by, among other things, "Portrait of a Marriage," written by his son Nigel, which revealed the enduring love for each other of the homosexual Harold and his androgynous wife, Victoria (Vita) Sackville-West. I do not think that Nicolson, while perhaps rueful, would have been pleased by his son's book, no matter how intelligent, respectful, filial, and affectionate it is to the memory of his parents. I think that he would have been pleased by his biography as written by his friend James Lees-Milne, with its impeccable and often extraordinary research of the facts—pleased because of Mr. Lees-Milne's intimate comprehension of circumstances, because of his understanding of character, and because of the fortunate accord of its historical and aesthetic qualities, defying Nicolson's sombre predictions of the future of biography nearly sixty years ago.

Mr. Lees-Milne's task was a difficult one for many reasons, among them the huge store of material that his subject left behind. Nicolson often referred to himself as indolent. There was indeed a moderate and epicurean facet of his character, reflected in his appearance: pink and plump, well dressed but a bit rumpled, with a slight touch of bohemianism, his collar points and hair curling away. At the same time, he was an indefatigable worker and writer, which at least suggests an astonishing kind of self-discipline. It was not only the quality but the quantity of work he imposed upon himself during his years in the Foreign Service which impressed his superiors. The corpus of Nicolson's written heritage is enormous. He wrote at least two dozen books; a monthly column and weekly reviews for about thirty years; reams of diplomatic memoranda and dispatches; a detailed diary for almost forty years; and more than ten thousand letters, often very intimate long ones, sometimes two or three a day. During his last years, when he was already senile and full of sleep, three volumes of his "Diaries and Letters" were published by his son Nigel. Their success was, as Mr. Lees-Milne writes, "phenomenal." Yet they contained only a fraction of his diaries and letters, and by no means the most interesting ones. (In one of his lucid moments, Nicolson told Nigel how odd it was to publish three books that he did not realize he had written.)

The amazing mass of his literary production hardly compromised its quality, except for his last two books ("The Age of Reason" and "Monarchy"). His mind was quick, and the facility of his style was extraordinary. He wrote many of his best books in a few months, some of them in a few weeks. Yet the prose of these was polished to perfection, while his speed of judicious reading made it possible for him to research in weeks a subject that would have taken years for other historians. This kind of virtuosity sometimes evoked the charge of dilettantism even in England, with its tradition of the amateur man of letters. His style was marked by a subdued but brilliant impressionism, which made some critics say he was unduly influenced by the French manner. Yet Mr. Lees-Milne records that as early as 1935 Michael Sadleir forecast that Nicolson would survive as one of the leading writers of his age. In 1960, John Betjeman at a Guildhall dinner pronounced Nicolson the greatest living master of English prose.

The subject of most of his books was biography and history. He wrote biographies of Verlaine, Swinburne, Tennyson, Byron, Sainte-Beuve, Benjamin Constant, Dwight Morrow, Lord Curzon, King George V—a list sufficient to illustrate the great range of his interests. He became famous with "Some People" (1927), which contains ironic and semi-fictitious portraits of people he knew. The best of his histories dealt with the Congress of Vienna and with the origins of the First World War. The latter, entitled "Lord Carnock: A Study in the Old Diplomacy" (1930), may be the most nearly perfect of his works. (He himself was inclined to think so.) It is also proof of the internal coherence of what might otherwise seem an excessively catholic and scattered œuvre. Lord Carnock (Sir Arthur Nicolson, Bart.) was his father. During the first twenty-eight years of Harold Nicolson's life, his father was posted to Teheran, Budapest, Sofia, Constantinople, Morocco, advancing from consul-general to His Majesty's Ambassador to the court at St. Petersburg, and ultimately to the headship of the Foreign Office. "Lord Carnock," as its subtitle tells us, is a history of the origins of the First World War; as the title tells us, it is also a history of Nicolson's father. This combination of history and biography, of the circle of a family together with the greater circle of events, was repeated in "Helen's Tower" (1937) and "The Desire to Please" (1943), in which Nicolson wrote about his uncle Lord Dufferin and his

"There're a billion people in China. At some point, some of them are going to need agents."

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eighteenth-century ancestor Hamilton Rowan. They contradict his melancholy projection of the inevitable dichotomy between the "scientific" and the "literary" tendencies of biography. Their unity reflects the propitious complementarity of individual memory and professional history, of personal participation and detached intellection.

There was, on the other hand, an unusual difference between Nicolson's ability to judge the past and his ability to judge the present. As a historian, Nicolson was often unerring; as a politician, he was often wrong. During his political career, he made mistakes of judgment, of which the evidence is there in his diaries and letters, but few traces of such mistakes exist in his books. The division of Mr. Lees-Milne's two volumes corresponds to the turning point of Nicolson's professional life. He had a very promising diplomatic career. Yet he chose to abandon it in 1929, for a number of reasons. Even the prospect of ambassadorships meant nothing to his wife, who would not accompany him to his posts abroad, and who thought the routine life of an ambassadorial wife uninteresting and wearisome. He himself thought—wrongly—that his diplomatic duties would conflict inevitably with his writing career. His superiors, with few exceptions, respected (and after "Some People" some of them even feared) Nicolson's writing; many of them read his books with pleasure. What is true is that he did not have the toughness of character necessary for the successful ascent of a statesman. Mr. Lees-Milne properly includes a personal remark that Harold Macmillan made to him about Nicolson and another prominent Englishman with great intellectual powers. "Yes, Balfour and Nicolson were highly civilized and cultivated, Macmillan said. "But although Balfour was extremely languid he was far from soft. He was lethargic but he was ruthless. Unlike Harold's, his spine was made of steel. He would sacrifice a friend of forty years without a murmur, without a moment's hesitation, if he decided that it was necessary to get rid of him. That was the difference. Besides Balfour did not care a damn what people said or thought about him. Harold did. He worried if he was criticised. He wanted to be liked. A fatal propensity."

Nicolson's life was not a triumph of character. Yet his work was a triumph of achievement. This is admirably set forth in this biography. Scholarly biographers—especially in these times, when there has been such a regrettable decline in the standards of documentation and in the management of evidence—would do well to emulate Mr. Lees-Milne's probity. He has read and used most of Nicolson's unpublished diaries and letters, always with the precise reference to their day, to their addressee, and sometimes to their circumstance. He went to the trouble (if that is the word) to read Nicolson's memoranda and dispatches in the British Foreign Office archives. Yet this biography is more interesting than the published diaries not only because of the biographer's opportunity to draw on a vast store of unpublished sources but also because he employs a style that, in this case, doubles the meaning of *le style, c'est l'homme. Il s'agit de deux hommes:* the biographer and the biographee. Mr. Lees-Milne has an exceptional empathy for Nicolson's style, which is not an easy one to emulate. He draws on some of Nicolson's inimitable images and weaves them into fine descriptive passages of his own:

> Conditions in Morocco at the turn of the century were archaic. There was no electric light in Tangier. There were no wheeled vehicles, not even a barrow. Rubbish was carried in panniers by donkeys. When asked out to dinner his father rode and his mother was carried in a sedan chair, preceded by a servant bearing a lantern. Harold too when a schoolboy would set out to a party on horseback, the flickering beams of the servant's lantern falling, now upon some iron-studded door in a blank wall, now upon a street fountain spluttering upon coloured tiles, and now upon a rat scuttling from an open sewer. His horse would pick its way cautiously through the mud and garbage. Suddenly a door would open in the silent street, disclosing a small courtyard, with a lamp hanging from a colonnade, its wick smoking angrily across the arches. The lamp was shaped like the lamps used at Pompeii. Years later Harold Nicolson, recalling these evening scenes in Tangier, realised that it was not the glamour of the East which that smoking lamp suggested to him. It was the life of Rome and even Athens which he, as a boy, had been privileged to experience.

Such, too, are the descriptions of the icy St. Petersburg nights; of the old, wizened Queen Victoria in her barouche, moving slowly through the yard of Wellington College; of Harold and Pierre de Lacretelle "tacking up and down the Bosphorus, dawdling on the sun-baked shores of the Black Sea, dallying in a low-ceilinged room in Therapia, and all the while reciting and talking about French poetry, while the water lapped against the walls outside and steamers hooted in the distance." Or of Siena, where Harold and his friends "strolled through the city gates and sat on the grass and looked at the great cathedral growing out of the house tops, and at the hills beyond, and caught lizards, and had tea and large cakes; and so back to Harold's barrack-like room which already seemed to have assumed some individuality. Every morning he walked across the Cathedral square, down some steps, and knocked at a sinister little door of the house of his teacher. Don Orlandi, a delightful old priest, lived in cool rooms smelling of violets and incense, and adorned with one framed photograph of the Martyrs Memorial in Oxford. He wore Balliol socks and did not approve of d'Annunzio, which Harold found rather a relief. And every evening Harold would pass through the red gates into the hush of the country outside." After a visit to Keats' house in Rome, Harold and other friends "motored down the Via Appia under a tomato-coloured sun. There was a little moon, black silhouettes and the chirping of crickets."

Readers of Nicolson will recognize the style. Does this suggest that Mr. Lees-Milne's portrait of Nicolson tends to emulation, adulation, the kind of hagiography against which Nicolson had warned: an "impure" biography, in sum? No: this is, in many ways, an old-fashioned biography, with all the virtues we may associate with that adjective, but without the vice of the omission of unpleasant or difficult intimate details. (I can find only one exception to this. Mr. Lees-Milne does not mention the Knebworth episode: Harold's acquisition of a venereal infection at a house-party, which he then confessed to Vita, whose response was that of sympathetic forgiveness—possibly a psychic milestone in their then young married lives.) The biography is candid about Nicolson's homosexuality and his wife's lesbianism. Mr. Lees-Milne and his wife were close friends of the Nicolsons during the last twenty years of their lives; he has included a few telling passages from their private correspondence, tactfully and yet without being reticent. Harold's and Vita's love for each other grew out of a sense of dependence, which was made easier

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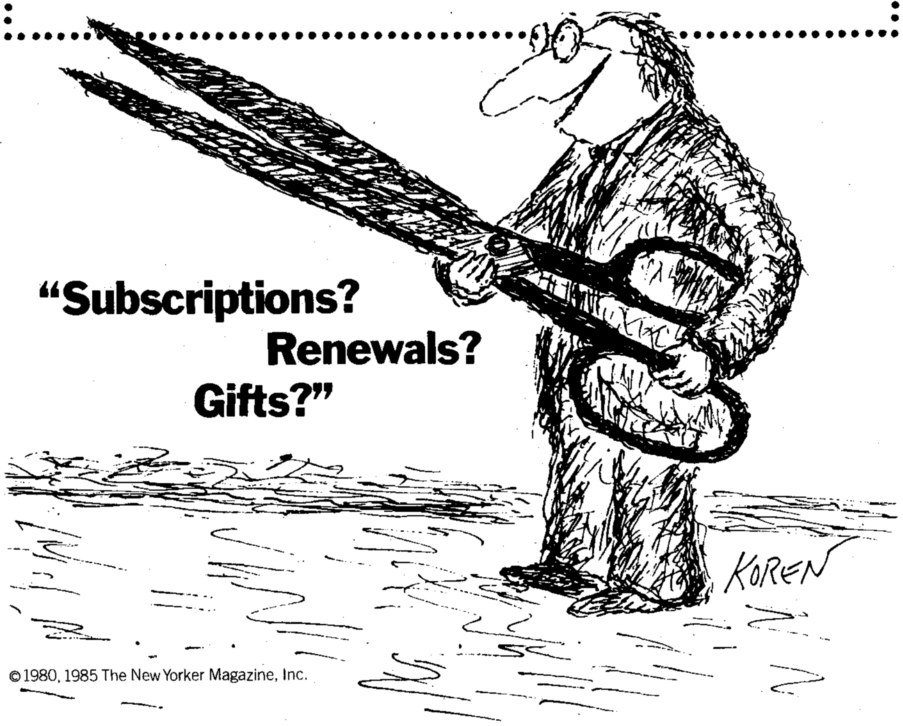
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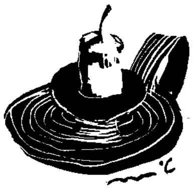
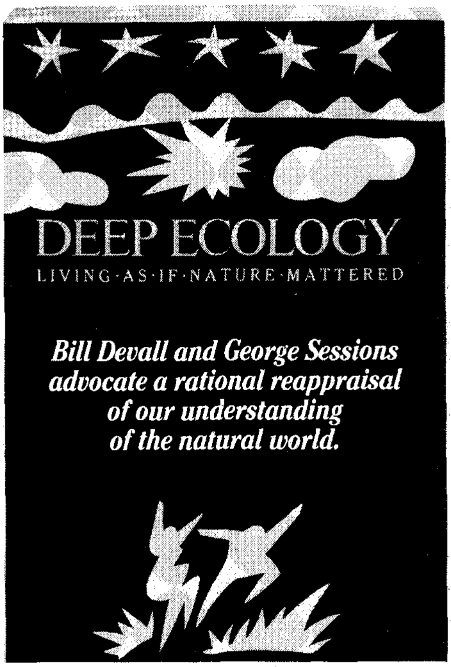
by the condition that theirs was an exceptional alliance rather than a marriage. "In fact it was because their marriage became totally divorced from the physical while based on the same cerebral interests that it endured so as to become one of the idyllic sagas of our century." Well, "idyllic saga" is perhaps too much: there was plenty in that relationship that was far from idyllic. But Mr. Lees-Milne understands matters that other recent commentators on this ménage have not. "Both of them had long been obsessed by the unorthodoxy of their marriage, and convinced that this unorthodoxy, coupled with the tolerance and understanding of both, was the main reason why their marriage had not only endured, but prospered." He also knows that Harold depended on his mother, because he "craved affection and protection. His love for his mother, which was deep and touching, suggests a certain vulnerability of character, an almost feminine dependence, in spite of his own strong will, upon psychical support in the harsh process of living. As he grew to manhood he realised that his gentle and unintellectual mother whom he never ceased to love and was in his turn to protect, was unable to provide the particular support he required. He had, like other sons before him, to seek it elsewhere." Mr. Lees-Milne read Nicolson with a close intelligence, gathering evidence sufficient to eschew the attribution of subconscious motives. "What these words convey," he writes in quoting from one of Nicolson's letters to his wife, "is that Harold needed a strong prop against which to lean . . . Vita was his prop. On the few occasions when he saw the prop threatened he panicked like the small boy he never ceased to be." And when, in one instance, Lord Curzon was cross with Nicolson, "this distressed Harold so much that he went downstairs at once and telegraphed to Vita, imploring her to come to him. It was a case of the little schoolboy, reprimanded by the headmaster, turning to his mother for consolation. Vita responded to his piteous appeal within a week." On another occasion, Harold wrote her, "I feel you are slipping away, you who are my anchor, my hope and all my peace." This to a woman who took selfish pride in being all sail and no anchor, surely no vessel in a domestic harbor of peace.



Nicolson was a complex man, who was well aware of his weaknesses and of his need to compensate for them. At seventeen, he wrote, "I am beginning to see that brain counts for little but that character counts everything, and it is not a pleasant thought as my character is weak and easily influenced." Yet his entire life was marked by his preference for fineness of intellect. He was, in his biographer's words, "worldly-wise and yet childlike, sensitive and yet bluff; full of fun, with an irrepressible tendency to tease. Without being strictly handsome, he was cherubic, and very lively." He surely had the English upper-class male habit of excessive concern with his looks. He was obsessed with youth: at thirty-one, he referred to himself as "middle-aged;" on his fiftieth birthday, he was crazily unhappy. He also had the odd habit, which Mr. Lees-Milne does not mention, of posing in an emphatically masculine posture, with his legs wide apart and his hands on his hips. There is really no need to psychoanalyze this intelligent man, whose contradictory tendencies existed on the conscious level of his mind. When this class-conscious aristocrat and aesthete imagined that he was a Socialist, his friend Christopher Sykes said that his Labour "proclivities were all talk and affectation." Critics have recently made much of his anti-Semitic remarks. Yet here was a man who early in his life proclaimed his support for Dreyfus, and who was among the first in England to stand up for German Jewish refugees.

John Sparrow, another friend, suggested (perhaps with a touch of exaggeration) at Nicolson's memorial service that his complicated character was that of a nineteenth-century Whig leading an eighteenth-century existence in the twentieth century. It is not the complications of Nicolson's character that ought to interest us. It is his writing; and his view of the world which is reflected in that writing. His cultivation and intelligence amaze us in retrospect; they belong to an age that is even further away than the Victorian and Edwardian circumstances in which he grew up. His biographer states, "Throughout his long life Harold never let a day pass without reading for half an hour some passage of Greek or Latin; he never went on a journey, even in the London tube, without carrying a Loeb edition of Euripides in his pocket." In 1944, Edmund Wilson wrote a critical essay



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about Nicolson for *The New Yorker* entitled "Through the Embassy Window," the gist of which was that, with a minor talent, Nicolson had an outdated and restricted view of the world, because of the class and the profession to which he belonged. In one sense, Wilson was right: if not Nicolson's style, his reticences in his biographies of Verlaine and Swinburne were almost Victorian. In the larger sense, Wilson was not. Nicolson's immense learning, his knowledge of the world, his understanding of diplomacy, his descriptions of character, his advocacy of certain enduring and humane principles were such that he, like every fine writer, transcends his background and his period. He is a writer whose descriptions of scenes in the late autumn afternoon of Western European civilization evoke not our melancholy but an almost sensual longing for the urbane elegance of those places. He thought that his writing would not survive. He also thought that in future biographies "psychological development will be traced in all its intricacy and in a manner comprehensible only to the experts," that a new kind of "impure" biography would prevail, identifying "an individual with some extraneous theory." It is pleasant to record that, by the hand of his friend James Lees-Milne, he escaped that fate. —JOHN LUKACS

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

STORMS AND SON, by Anthony Caputi (Atheneum; $14.95). Hugh Storms is a Buffalo lawyer (whose father was a trolley-car motorman) in his fifties, and when we meet him he is alone in the world and more or less happy only in his work. His wife left him for another man five years ago, his son (and only child) was shot to death in his Greenwich Village apartment three months ago, and he has just been mugged. The mugging turns him into a man of purpose and action. The police have done nothing in solving his son's murder. He heads for New York to try to find out for himself. He learns almost at once that his beloved Michael was a drug pusher. But there is worse to come. Mr. Caputi's purpose seems to be to reveal Storms to himself by way of a revelation of life in the underside of lower Manhattan. He does it well—almost too well. It is a revelation composed entirely of misery and squalor and danger just around the corner.

LAST LETTERS FROM HAV, by Jan Morris (Random House; $14.95). The author tells us that this series of letters from the ancient eastern-Mediterranean city of Hav was written over the final months of 1984. There is not, nor ever was, any such city, but Miss Morris can make you believe that Hav was real, that it had allure for Marco Polo, Tolstoy, Mark Twain, Diaghilev, Lawrence of Arabia, and Sigmund Freud, and that a number of invasions and occupations by alien civilizations—Chinese, Venetian, British, Imperial Russian—created on an obscure peninsula in Asia Minor a cultural mosaic more splendid than any ever seen before. Miss Morris, of course, is one of the most accomplished travel writers around today. In this spirited little book, her precise descriptions of the people of Hav, their history and mores, and the anatomy of the doomed city (all she tells us about the nature of its doom is that, as she hurriedly left in her rattly Renault, warships were coming) are engrossing and often funny—evoking a lively and lovely past that never was. Map.

THE CHARLATAN, by William Hamilton (Simon & Schuster; $15.95). Sonny Turchik changes his name to Edgar Barnes and his bloodlines to something worthy of a Barnes (Southern and thoroughbred), sports the well-tailored tack that reeks of old wealth, and learns to nicker and whinny on cue. By the age of thirty-two, he is a winner: sleeping between the black-and-tan sheets of his wife's canopy bed (black and tan are her stable's colors), and underwritten by the bank that bears her family's name. Twenty years later, as this cunning black comedy begins, Edgar has had it with his wife, who takes drugs the way her horses do not, and she has had it with him. Whether he will end up grazing on Kentucky bluegrass, as it were, or reduced to glue is the question that spurs on the plot, which spans a running of the Triple Crown. Mr. Hamilton's eye and ear for the looks and asides of the idle rich are familiar to fans of his cartoons. This novel, his second, proves him to be a master of a more extended sort of caricature as well, and also of full-color prose that is as succinct as a Degas: from a closeup of seven colts that are like "big leather ladders" to a distant view of a single colt "tiny as a fishing fly complete with the silk dab of black and tan behind his mane."

An Affair on the Appian Way, by Michael Levey (Hamish Hamilton/David & Charles; $15.95). Though it becomes increasingly pedantic, this melodrama set in Trajan's Rome begins well enough, with Julia, the Chief Vestal Virgin, agreeing to look into the murder of a socialite whose sense of familial duty may or may not have explained why she frequented her family's suburban tomb. Enter an irreverent Gaul, a gigolo of sorts, who soon has Julia comparing him to Cupid and to Paris. Mr. Levey makes some amusing allusions to another empire (dowagers lament the shortage of good domestics) and to its capital (tabloid headlines announce "Patrician Lady's Demise Poses Puzzle for Prefect"), but he soon proves unable to repress a faith in Freudian psychoanalytical theory which has Julia citing instances of self-suppression and role reversal and pointing out (punningly) "tiny flecks of gilt" powdering her skin.

GENERAL

Freedom Rising, by James North (Macmillan; $19.95). A report on South Africa, Namibia, and Zimbabwe by an American writer who spent four and a half years in that part of the world. James North (a pseudonym) travelled through the entire region, usually by hitching rides, and often aided those engaged in subverting the system of apartheid. Along with its narrative of the author's experience, the book contains a capsule history of southern Africa and a sharp political analysis of the modern South African state. Mr. North anatomizes apartheid: he writes of "Bantu Education," which insures that black children can never rise above menial work; of the fallacy of "constructive engagement;" of the all-black towns, like Soweto, where one and a half million human beings live in squalor; of the drift toward war in South Africa—a war that he predicts will be long and violent. Photographs.

Germany Today: A Personal Report, by Walter Laqueur (Little, Brown; $16.95). The noted historian and expert on international affairs shows us the evolution of West Germany (with glances at the East) and offers a commonsense approach to a people somewhat lacking in that quality. He sees no chance of a Nazi revival in Germany, but he does find a pervasive tendency to panic and gloom and to emotional zigzags and exaggerations both in public life and in art. Like other advanced industrial nations, Germany has suffered from the decline of heavy industry and from concomitant unemployment; many Germans have evoked the economic nightmares of Weimar—inflation, depression—without taking into account the greater economic and political solidity of their present government. Germans had hoped for a closer integration of Europe, and when, through no fault of theirs, it did not occur they fell back into a nationalism whose principal feature is hostility to the United States. Mr. Laqueur analyzes the sources of anti-Americanism; he doubts whether most Germans would be willing to do without the protection of NATO and the United States. In his assessment, the Federal Republic is the most reasonable government the Germans have achieved so far.

The Fifties: Photographs of America (Pantheon; $25 cloth, $14.95 paper). A diverting collection of black-and-white pictures. Twelve photographers are represented, among them Eve Arnold, Cornell Capa, Wayne Miller, and Inge Morath. In a foreword, John Chancellor takes issue with the popularly held view that the fifties were a time of conformity, mediocrity, and apathy, and the photographs (which, unfortunately, are furnished with the stingiest of captions) seem to bear him out. In subject matter, they range over much of the American scene of the period—football games, proms, angry crowds of white citizens at the opening of Southern schools to black students, street demonstrations for and against the execution of the Rosenbergs, life in trailer parks and migrant-labor camps, soldiers returning from Korea, McCarthy, Marilyn Monroe, Khrushchev, and Allen Ginsberg (looking like a college freshman).

MYSTERY AND CRIME

Killing Orders, by Sara Paretsky (Morrow; $15.95). V. I. (Victoria Iphigenia) Warshawski is probably the only fictional female private eye currently at work in Chicago, and there are very few private eyes anywhere about whom we are told so

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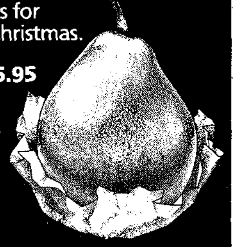

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much. In this, her third, case—which has to do with how some stock certificates worth five million dollars were removed from the safe at a Dominican priory and replaced by counterfeits—she recalls not only every move she makes in her explication of the problem but what she eats (*"Pollo in galantina* for me, veal kidneys for Ferrant;" "A stein and a plate of sauerbraten helped;" "I ate heartily . . . of cabbage soup, chicken, dumplings, and apple tart") and what she wears ("a light sweatshirt, loose pants, and a down vest;" "a three-quarter-length double-breasted jacket and a skirt with two side pleats. A knit silk top of pale gold . . . open-toed red-leather pumps") and what she drives (first an Omega and then a Toyota). But she never forgets that she is telling a story, and a pretty good story it is.

A SHOCK TO THE SYSTEM, by Simon Brett (Scribners; $13.95). An amusing morality tale about a semi-successful corporate sociopath named Graham, who murders right and left rather than spend the rest of his career lighting the cigars of one super-successful superior after another. Simon Brett devotes two chapters to an analysis of Graham's fast-track past, which began at the top of the class in prep school and ascended steadily until, as Chapter 3 begins, Graham is heir apparent to the Head of Personnel in a corporation at a time when corporations everywhere are changing their Personnel Departments to Departments of Human Resources. The pace picks up as his career stalls and he tries to repair it with everything from an unpremeditated blow of an umbrella handle to a scheme involving a rented car, a stolen credit card, sleeping pills, an alarm clock, hip waders, and one last cigar. Graham's madness is rarely evident to others (he knows enough to convert inappropriate giggles into appropriate sobs), but his folly is evident to the reader long before he persuades himself that "the random gods of chance" are on his side.

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[*From the Norfolk* (*Va.*) *Virginian-Pilot*]

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